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14. ABSTRACT <p>American interests in Africa are growing amid a rapidly changing world order and an increasingly complex global environment. As the single, recognized super power in the world, the U.S. is faced with progressively more challenging problems but with dwindling resources to meet its security strategy. U.S. national security objectives in Africa will seek to advance American public and private interests while confronting the historical challenges of Africa. U.S. interests in Africa range from the protection of U.S. citizens abroad and at home, to obtaining resources necessary to sustain the vitality of the U.S. economy. Complicating the attainment of these objectives, the U.S. is heavily engaged in two armed conflicts, is undergoing the deepest economic downfall since the Great Depression and its diplomatic capacity has yet to rebound from years of budget cuts and disregard. Current conditions warrant a new engagement plan using "smart power" approach in foreign policy matters in Africa.</p> <p>The term "smart power" has increasingly been heard in the lexicon of U.S. foreign policy makers and government officials. It refers to a skillful combination of traditional hard power and less-conventional soft power methods by United States Government (USG) officials to achieve American interests abroad. Applying smart power in Africa will rely on a greater preponderance of soft power, where conditions are uniquely suited for its use. The USG has already implemented some highly successful soft power programs which can be leveraged for future gains, but more reform and growth is needed in specific areas that will eventually generate greater flexibility for U.S. policymakers and those tasked with implementing US policy.</p>					
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JOINT FORCES STAFF COLLEGE
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Working “Smarter,” Not “Harder”:
Emphasizing Soft Power In Africa to Achieve U.S. Interests

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A paper submitted to the Faculty of the Joint Advanced Warfighting School in partial satisfaction of the requirements for a Master of Science Degree in Joint Campaign Planning and Strategy.

The content of this paper reflects my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the Joint Forces Staff College or the Department of the Defense.

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ABSTRACT

The Inauguration Ceremonies on 20 January, 2009, marked an important, historical moment in the U.S. with the swearing in of President Barack Obama. The ascendance of Barak Obama to the Office of the Presidency was much anticipated, not only by Americans but by foreign leaders and their nations. No where is it more profoundly anticipated than on the continent of Africa where African leaders expect a new level of engagement with the U.S. To the delight of African nations, President Obama and his cabinet have expressed a need to increasingly engage Africa and to use a “smarter” approach when doing so. Will the U.S. government be ready to execute this order?

American interests in Africa are growing amid a rapidly changing world order and an increasingly complex global environment. As the single, recognized super power in the world, the U.S. is faced with progressively more challenging problems but with dwindling resources to meet its security strategy. U.S. national security objectives in Africa will seek to advance American public and private interests while confronting the historical challenges of Africa. U.S. interests in Africa range from the protection of U.S. citizens abroad and at home, to obtaining resources necessary to sustain the vitality of the U.S. economy. Complicating the attainment of these objectives, the U.S. is heavily engaged in two armed conflicts, is undergoing the deepest economic downfall since the Great Depression and its diplomatic capacity has yet to rebound from years of budget cuts and disregard. Current conditions warrant a new engagement plan using “smart power” approach in foreign policy matters in Africa.

The term “smart power” has increasingly been heard in the lexicon of U.S. foreign policy makers and government officials. It refers to a skillful combination of traditional hard power and less-conventional soft power methods by United States Government (USG) officials to achieve American interests abroad. Applying smart power in Africa will rely on a greater preponderance of soft power, where conditions are uniquely suited for its use. The USG has already implemented some highly successful soft power programs which can be leveraged for future gains, but more reform and growth is needed in specific areas that will eventually generate greater flexibility for U.S. policymakers and those tasked with implementing US policy.

The U.S. can best meet its own national security objectives, and the needs of African nations, by increasingly relying on soft power instruments as the focus of its smart way ahead. By working smarter, not harder, the U.S. can achieve its strategic foreign policy objectives in Africa.

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INTRODUCTION

In 2007, a bipartisan commission sponsored by the Center for Strategic and International Studies defined “smart power” as being “neither hard nor soft” but a “skillful combination of both”.¹ The commission stressed the current imbalance between the United States Government’s (USG) emphases on hard power vice softer methods to achieve U.S. security objectives. Individuals contributing to the study reached consensus that the over reliance on hard power in world affairs has diminished the U.S.’s role as a world leader since September 11, 2001. They concluded that American interests in an increasingly complex world are more easily attained through the “smart” application of all the elements of power, with a larger emphasis in U.S. strategy on soft power.

In early 2008, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee held a series of hearings regarding the benefits of using “smart power” to achieve U.S. national security objectives. In March, General (ret.) Anthony Zinni and Admiral (ret.) Leighton W. Smith testified regarding the security of American strategic interest by means other than the U.S. military. Both former senior military officers concurred with repeated assessments that the U.S. had excessively turned to coercion or threats to influence the international scene in recent dealings with foreign nations.² On April 24th, former Deputy Secretary of State Mr. Richard L. Armitage accompanied by Mr. Joseph F. Nye, Dean Emeritus John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, testified that emphasizing “soft

¹ Center for Strategic and International Studies, *CSIS Commission on Smart Power, A Smarter, More Secure America* (Washington DC: CSIS, 2007), 7.

² Anthony C. Zinni, Remarks to Senate Foreign Relations Committee, *Rebuilding America’s Smart Power*, 110th Congress, 2nd Session, March 5, 2008, <http://foreign.senate.gov/testimony/2008/ZinniTestimony080305a.pdf> (accessed October 20, 2008).

power” would yield a more appropriate balance in policy.³ All testimonies were favorably received by the bipartisan committee co-chaired by Senator Joe Biden (D) and Senator Sam Luger (R).

The idea that the United States must not rely on force or hard power as a primary means of achieving its objectives was echoed by Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates on several occasions when he described the military serving in a supporting role to the diplomacy activities led by the State Department. The Department of Defense (DoD) was able to showcase this approach on October 1, 2008, when it announced full operational capability for its newest combatant command headquarters, Africa Command (AFRICOM). AFRICOM was singled out for its innovative approach to organizing for interagency cooperation and its more holistic approach toward implementing U.S. security strategy. As described by Secretary Gates, the command is ideally suited to prevent conflict and promote U.S. interests on the continent by focusing on “the three D’s: defense, diplomacy and development” through its military-civilian Manning.⁴ AFRICOM’s structure and orientation support the U.S. move to smart power as a basis for advancing U.S. strategic interests in Africa.⁵

This paper will examine the premise of “smart power” against the backdrop of contemporary Africa where U.S. interests are increasingly at stake. Over the past several decades the U.S. has experienced mixed results while employing varying levels of hard

³ Richard L. Armitage, Statement before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, *Strategic Use of U.S. Military and Other Powers*, 110th Congress, 2nd Session, April 24, 2008, <http://foreign.senate.gov/testimony/2008/ArmitageTestimony080424a.pdf> (accessed 30 September, 2008).

⁴ Robert M. Gates, Remarks to the Center for Strategic and International Studies, Washington D.C., January 26, 2008, <http://www.defenselink.mil/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=1211> (accessed October 3, 2008).

⁵ For the purpose of this paper, Africa includes the countries within the AFRICOM Area of Responsibility which include 53 countries. The countries include those contained within the continent proper, minus Egypt (U.S. Central Command responsibility). Information gained from AFRICOM’s official website at: <http://www.africom.mil/africomFAQs.asp> (accessed October 23, 2008).

and soft power in Africa. This paper will review the expanding nature of U.S. interests in Africa, and will examine the current strategic environment to provide context for evaluating policy objectives in Africa. Given the unprecedented opportunity to make dramatic shifts in the conduct of U.S. foreign policy afforded by the new Administration, this paper will identify the impact of new approaches in Africa to achieve U.S. interests. Next, the paper will review the nuances of hard and soft power, and will determine their applicability to Africa. This paper will show that U.S. national security policy in Africa is best served through a smart power approach with an added emphasis on the use of soft power as the primary means of achieving its goals and objectives. Finally, the author will offer specific recommendations that include reforming existing government structures, and expanding systems and initiatives to build U.S. soft power capacity.

CHAPTER ONE – WHY AFRICA, WHY NOW?

U.S. INTERESTS IN AFRICA

America's security interests in Africa are very limited. At present we have no permanent or significant military presence anywhere in Africa: We have no Bases; we station no combat forces; and we homeport no ships. We do desire access to facilities and material, which have been and might be especially important in the event of contingencies or evacuations. But ultimately, we see very little strategic interest in Africa.

- *U.S. Security Strategy for Sub-Sahara Africa, DoD, 1995*⁶

Africa holds growing geo-strategic importance and is a high priority of this Administration. It is a place of promise and opportunity, linked to the United States by history, culture, commerce, and strategic significance. Our goal is an African continent that knows liberty, peace, stability and increasing prosperity.

- *The National Security Strategy of the United States, 2006*⁷

Introduction

The strategic importance of Africa to the United States is expanding. At stake are a number of vital and important interests to the nation. The war against Islamic extremism and its use of terrorism as a primary tactic is at the forefront of U.S. policy in Africa because it is directly and indirectly related to the protection of U.S. citizens abroad. Other factors that draw the attention of the U.S. and other nations are the abundance of natural resources in Africa and the continent's geographic positioning adjacent to global commons. To achieve stated U.S. national security policy objectives, the security and stability of the region is advantageous to American public and private interests. Unfortunately, internal conflict in Africa is an everyday occurrence that has the potential to unexpectedly spiral into situations requiring international intervention.

⁶ U.S. Department of Defense, *Security Strategy for Sub-Saharan Africa*, August, 1995, <http://www.defenselink.mil/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=943> (accessed October 11, 2008).

⁷ The White House, *The National Security Strategy of the United States*, March, 2006, 37.

Africa is particularly at risk due to a history of poor governance, internal conflict, weak civic institutions and fluctuating demographics. This chapter will explain the strategic importance of Africa to U.S. national security and why the U.S. has a vested interest in actively shaping its future.

Vital National Interest

The strategic interests of any nation vary in their importance, complexity and in the resources needed to secure them. Clausewitz described national interests with general principles of survival and prosperity. Self preservation is essential to every nation. A nation must act to counter any threat to its existence using all elements of national power to achieve success. The use of military force is historically used to preserve the state. A nation will also act in a manner that enriches the prosperity of its citizens by promoting economic growth and international influence. U.S. national interests extend beyond survival and prosperity to include the promotion of national values and a fundamental belief in democracy and freedom. The achievement of these important national interests relies on the integration of all elements of national power, but is less relevant to the direct security of the nation. As a result, important versus vital national interests are less likely to involve full military intervention. Identifying and prioritizing national interests is the foundation for developing a national security strategy.

Today, the U.S. vital interest in defending the homeland begins abroad where terrorist acts have occurred against Americans and in areas that foster Islamic fundamentalists and terrorism. To combat terrorism, the U.S. must cooperate with, and incite action by, African nations to reduce the threat to Americans abroad. There is

considerable evidence that Islamic extremist operating within Africa pose a serious threat to U.S. interests. In 1998, the American Embassies in Tanzania and Ethiopia were attacked by Islamic extremists. The bombings led to the death of 229 innocent African and American victims, while injuring in excess of a thousand.⁸ In September, 2006, Al Qaeda leader Ayman Al-Zawahiri announced in a video tape that Al Qaeda (AQ) and the Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat (GSPC), an Islamic extremist group based in Algeria, had formed an alliance.⁹ The collaboration of the GSPC with AQ extends the threat of extremist ideology into Northern Africa. The GSPC now serves as an additional source of fighters and funding for AQ operations, and is trumpeted by AQ senior leaders as another sign of the legitimacy of claiming the return of the Islamic caliphate. This experienced and well-known terrorist group joins an already existing AQ network operating in eastern Africa. The AQ presence in Africa generates a direct threat to Americans and their interests abroad as evidenced by previous attacks and current calls for violence.

African based Islamic extremism extends beyond continental borders and poses a direct threat to American interests. Foreign fighters detained in Iraq have declared African citizenship and claim active recruiting is still ongoing in mosques and neighborhoods throughout Africa. A recent report cited that 39% of the foreign fighters entering Iraq during several months in 2006 were from African countries, primarily from

⁸ Condoleeza Rice, Remarks at the Tenth Anniversary Commemoration of the Bombings of U.S. Embassies in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam, Dean Acheson Auditorium, Washington D.C., August 7, 2008, <http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2008/08/107997.htm> (accessed October 19, 2008).

⁹ Craig Whitlock, "Al-Qaeda's Far-Reaching New Partner: Salafist Group Finds Limited Appeal in Its native Algeria," *Washington Post*, October 5, 2006, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/10/04/AR2006100402006.html> (accessed October 13, 2008).

North African nations such as Libya, Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia.¹⁰ International terrorism is supported by African bases through the supply of indispensable resources such as arms, money and combatants. More often than not, the recruitment of fighters and the provision of aid from Africa goes unchallenged by local or national authorities as a result of either their unwillingness or incapacity to act. For example, militant extremists easily circumvent modern banking oversight by the use of *hawalas* to move money in and out of Africa throughout the terrorist network.¹¹ The relative ease of movement of both money and resources throughout the region poses a direct threat to American citizens and institutions, and raises the likelihood that future terrorist activity may originate in Africa.

U.S. interests are indirectly threatened by Africa's inability to control people or lands within its own borders. Africa contains large areas that remain ungoverned or minimally-controlled by national governments due to their unwillingness or inability to maintain order within the confines of their borders. Northern Africa has great expanses of desert that are not controlled by either police or military authorities primarily because governments elect to concentrate on regulation in densely populated areas to better protect and/or control their own people. In other instances, states have failed, and no organized party or government is in charge. These areas represent opportunities for terrorist to openly plan, train and stage for future attacks. Somalia is one example where a failed state has served as a safehaven for terrorists. In the absence of a functioning government, the U.S. on occasion has elected to take direct action to confront these

¹⁰ Richard A. Oppel Jr, "Foreign Fighters in Iraq Are Tied to Allies of U.S.," *New York Times*, November 22, 2007, <http://www.nytimes.com/2007/11/22/world/middleeast/22fighters.html> (accessed October 19, 2008).

¹¹ *Hawalas* is an informal value transfer system based on performance and honor of a huge network of money brokers which are primarily located in the Middle East, Africa and Asia. As the system does not depend on the legal enforceability of claims, it can operate even in the absence of a legal and juridical environment.

terrorists such as the March 2008 bombings in Somalia.¹² These isolated attacks have managed to disrupt safehavens, but the effects are only temporary and seldom produce the sustained progress that continuous engagement on military and diplomatic levels provide.

There are opportunities for terrorists to obtain crucial support from corrupt African nation-states that often show a propensity to accept bribes or direct solicitation. Terrorist organizations that make substantial payments to security officials are often allowed to enter a country and operate as long as attacks are not conducted within its borders. Some African nations such as Libya and Sudan have been sympathetic to terrorist organizations in the past and have supported them with state-sponsored resources such as funding or training. Illicit activity such as narco-trafficking, human trafficking and the black market in Africa have all served as sources of fiscal support for terrorist organizations. The Honorable Joseph Melrose, former Ambassador to Sierra Leone, testified before Congress that terrorist organizations such as AQ and Hizbollah benefit from the illicit diamond trade in Africa.¹³ In other reported cases, extremist organizations simply solicit for donations in poor neighborhoods and in locations holding similar religious beliefs. Each of these methods allows terrorist organizations to extract valuable resources from Africa, making the curtailment of direct state-sponsorship to terrorist, condoning government tolerance of terrorism and stemming the flow of illicit

¹² Sahra Abdi Ahmed, "U.S. Launches Missile Strike in Somalia", *Reuters*, March 3, 2008, <http://www.reuters.com/article/topNews/idUSL0323215620080303> (accessed October 19, 2008).

¹³ Joseph H. Melrose, Jr., Former American Ambassador to Sierra Leone Joseph, Testimony Before the Senate Committee On Government Affairs, Subcommittee On Oversight of Government Management, *U.S. Government Role in Fighting the Conflict Diamond Trade*, February 13, 2002, <http://hsgac.senate.gov/021302witness.htm> (accessed November 30, 2008).

fiscal support to terrorist organizations important goals of the overarching U.S. security strategy.

U.S. homeland defense begins abroad with an active effort to detect and counter threats at the source. Africa serves as a haven for extremist ideologies by offering sanctuary, recruits and resources for their operations. Severing the link between terrorist organizations and potential support from Africa is a vital national interest of the U.S.

Important National Interests

American interests in Africa are much broader than just addressing terrorism and are reflected in the proliferation of U.S. policies, programs and initiatives directed toward the region. The U.S. seeks to advance global markets where American products, services and enterprises can flourish. The strengthening of the free market in Africa would make it a more productive member in the world's economy and a stronger U.S. trade partner. Africa is rich in natural resources needed by many nations to fuel their economic ambitions. Its large reserve of hydrocarbons is strategically important to the U.S. as well as other principal nations like China, India and members of the European Union. A leading U.S. interest in Africa is the potential for greater domestic energy security. Imports of crude oil from Africa represent nearly 25% of current U.S. daily use with market projections indicating a steady rise over the next several years. Nigeria, a nation member of Oil Producing Exporting Countries (OPEC), represents the single greatest African exporter of oil, and fifth largest contributor to U.S. domestic consumption. Nigerian oil exports to the U.S. surpass both Iraq and Kuwait combined.¹⁴ Algeria,

¹⁴ U.S. Department of Energy, Energy Information Administration, *U.S. Imports by Country of Origin: Total Crude Oil and Products*, September 30, 2008,

Angola and Libya are also members of OPEC. Non-OPEC countries that contribute to American consumption include Cameroon, Chad, Congo, Equatorial Guinea and Gabon.¹⁵ The U.S. has a vested interest in safeguarding its existing energy enterprises within Africa. In 2006, ExxonMobil announced its affiliate in Nigeria had started production in oil fields where a total of \$1.3 billion had already been invested. It expects profit substantially from this investment if Nigeria remains a stable nation.¹⁶ The availability of African oil entering the U.S. market reduces volatility caused by a disruption in any one Middle Eastern or South American source, affording greater stability to the U.S. market.

Africa's other natural resources promise enormous potential profits if trade is allowed to develop with a stable African economy. The quantities of raw materials and finished products imported into the U.S. from Africa have grown steadily over the past several years. Natural gas, gold, uranium and other precious minerals are all imported for public and private use. The U.S. is not alone in its desire for materials, goods and services originating in Africa as many countries are seeking greater access to its resources and products. In return, a significant quantity of items produced worldwide are bought and sold daily in African markets. While African imports typically lag behind exports, they have shown a steady rise and promise even more growth with the projected surge in the population of Africa.

http://tonto.eia.doe.gov/dnav/pet/pet_move_impcus_a2_nus_ep00_im0_mbb1_m.htm (accessed October 3, 2008).

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Business Wire, "ExxonMobil Announces Third Major Nigeria Standup for Year," July 26, 2006, http://www.businesswire.com/portal/site/exxonmobil/index.jsp?ndmViewId=news_view& (accessed October 8, 2008).

American interests in Africa include the protection of global commons that serve the world's markets. Shipping lanes surrounding Africa to the north and east, passing south near the Cape of Good Hope, or originating from the western African oil and gas fields must remain clear and free of obstruction or threats. The Gulf of Aden off the Somalia coast is now considered the most hazardous passage way in international waters due to hijackers. At least 7.5% of the world's ships pass through it annually translating into nearly 250 vessels a day.¹⁷ In the first nine months of 2008, the waters off Somalia accounted for nearly one-third of the overall reported attacks on shipping. The coast off of Nigeria in the Gulf of Guinea is equally dangerous and ranked second to Somalia in the number of reported incidents in 2008.¹⁸ The U.S. has historically intervened when safe passage to U.S. or world markets is jeopardized. Today, piracy along the East and West African coasts threatens the security of international maritime routes and will require further attention by the international community to mitigate the impact on the global economy.

As clearly intended in the National Security Strategy, U.S. interests in Africa include the desire for greater "freedom, justice and human dignity" throughout the world, and for America to lead a growing "community of democracies".¹⁹ A fundamental underpinning of the U.S. security strategy is the premise that democratic nations are less prone to go to war with each other. Nations founded on representative governments are also believed to treat their citizens with greater respect while meeting the most basic needs of their citizens. Nations exercising democratic principles are inclined to engage

¹⁷ ICC International Maritime Bureau, *Piracy and Armed Robbery Against Ships: Report for the Period 1 January to 30 September 2008*, London: October, 2008, 25.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ The White House, *National Security Strategy*, ii.

favorably with the U.S. government and private industry. On the eve of President Bush's second trip to Africa, he said "People who live in societies based on freedom and justice are more likely to reject the false promise of the extremist ideology".²⁰ Only 40% of African nations currently enjoy some form of representative government.²¹ Many African nations have made marked improvements toward democratic reforms, economic stability and righting social injustice but much more progress is needed.

The U.S. has universally endorsed positive measures by African nations to reform government. However, the promotion of human rights and the spread of democratic principles have historically been difficult to develop in nations that have no intention of enforcing the reforms. The U.S. refrained from participating in the colonization of Africa and championed Africa's voice for freedom during its struggle for independence. Regardless of the past, the U.S. still faces charges by those within Africa, as well as nations competing for interest within the continent, that our foreign policy is inconsistent and inappropriate at times. Africa has tested the U.S.'s resolve as a world leader, but our experience in Africa serves as an example of a good intentioned if not somewhat blemished record.

Summary

American interests in Africa range from defense of U.S. citizens at home and abroad to maintaining access to strategic resources on the continent. Our role in

²⁰ President George W. Bush, *President and Mrs. Bush Discuss Africa Policy, Trip to Africa*, Smithsonian National Museum of African Art, Office of the Press Secretary, February 14, 2008, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2008/02/20080214.html> (accessed September 2, 2008).

²¹ Anthony Lake and Christine Todd Whitman, Task Force Chairs, *More Than Humanitarianism: A Strategic U.S. Approach Toward Africa*, Independent Task Force Report No. 56 (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, January 2006), 6.

influencing Africa to pursue democratic reforms and promote human rights directly affects our position as a world leader. With better understanding and appreciation for American interests in Africa, the U.S. can focus on forming a coherent and consistent strategy to achieve national security objectives in Africa. The implementation of U.S. policy in Africa will not be easy given environmental conditions in both Africa and the U.S. The U.S. will face competition for influence in Africa from multiple regional and international actors.

CHAPTER TWO – DEFINING THE LANDSCAPE: THE STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT

Introduction

American national security policy in Africa faces both great opportunities and even greater challenges in the foreseeable future. While Africa has experienced important security gains within its borders, recent history reminds the world that it remains a continent prone to poor governance, internal conflict, economic immaturity, and great strain imposed by shifting demographics. The U.S. must form a deeper understanding of African challenges and demographics to effectively operate in the region. The U.S. will need to complete an honest assessment of the resources we are willing to dedicate to achieve and maintain influence in the region, given the strain on the American military, economy and diplomatic corps. It is imperative for the U.S. to appreciate the number and diversity of state and non-state actors competing for influence in Africa. The strategic environment can not be viewed simply in the context of previous constructs, but must be visualized with the complexity offered by a multi-polar, globalized world. This chapter provides an assessment of the current strategic environment impacting the implementation of U.S. policy in Africa.

The African Landscape

During the latter half of the 20th Century, life in Africa was dominated by poor governance and civil conflict. In many ways, Africa has never enjoyed the fulfillment of good governance. Poor governance inflicted a successive string of conflicts causing

millions of casualties, and none have suffered more than the younger generations of Africans. Where direct conflict was absent, extreme tension existed between governments and their citizens. The ubiquitous nature of conflict in Africa quietly claimed millions of lives, drained precious resources and slowed economic growth. It also set the conditions for some of the worst man-made atrocities known to the modern world. Africa continues to experience an inordinate number of flashpoints and fault-lines that have the potential to erupt quickly and squander the very best plans for regional security and stability. The shifting levels of demographics in the region only exasperate the problem and make simple, continent-wide solutions to Africa's problems impossible.

Since poor governance has been systemic from the time that colonial rule ended until the present day, the people of Africa were slow to gain a political voice. They first struggled with armed conflict against colonial powers and then against each other once freedom was obtained. Once independent, African nations suffered from government inexperience and faltered during early attempts to implement democratic principles. The later half of the 20th century was replete with government failures to accomplish any meaningful advances in pluralistic forms of governance. Individual personalities dominated government and appealed to the population using great charm and charisma. New governments fell short in exercising their responsibilities to govern, often struggling to maintain legitimacy with their own citizens. Institutions to promote democratic principles and champion the cause of institutional advancements faltered repeatedly. The cause was easily identified—the effect was devastating; economic advancement was often placed on hold while civil disobedience grew and war ensued. To retain power, sitting governments readily turned to the only tool they knew to preserve control: military

action and strong arm tactics. Africans lost their lives in the common phenomenon of countless civil wars, military coups and power struggles. Dating back to the 1950's, Africa has experienced over 90 coups attempts, "not including situations where political leaders were killed but the same party continued to rule".²² Africa is susceptible to political violence and coups still occur today. In November 2008, Guinea-Bissau witnessed its third coup attempt since 1980. Although unsuccessful at that time, President Joao Bernardo Vieira and his chief rival were assassinated in March 2009. The countries fate rests in its ability to peacefully transition according to national rule of law. These conflicts and continued civil unrest serve to underscore the effects of poor governance in modern-day African politics.

Traditionally, Africa's ruling systems were not based on principles of pluralism or representative government; this contributed to ethnic strife and atrocities. Following decolonization, Africa did not immediately respond to leaders' promises for democratic reforms. In fact political parties were banded, free speech was discouraged, and the press was either state-controlled or suppressed. Elections borne in Africa consistently suffered from reports of deliberate ballot tampering and mass fraud by its leadership, a fact reluctantly endorsed by much of the international community who oversaw the process. Adding further complexity to the political turmoil, African nations were often divided along tribal or religious lines with a common belief that an advancement of one group was a direct threat to the good will of the other. Resentment among groups of citizens, and between citizens and their government created formidable challenges to non-violent

²² Peiter Esterhuysen and Mike Hough, "Military Coups in Africa: Unconditional Condemnation?" *Strategic Review for Southern Africa* (November 1999), http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_hb1402/is_2_21/ai_n28756294/pg_5?tag=artBody:col1 (accessed November 23, 2008).

transfers of power. Physical change in governments often led to brutal persecution of former government officials. Outrage extended beyond mere government officials to also include members of their tribal affiliation. African nations labored to advance past tribal jealousies to find a national identity that would unite people. The results were predictable if not preventable: basic needs of citizens were unfulfilled, many lives were lost, and an economy that already lagged behind the world average fell further into depression. Further hampering the progress of African nationalism, the Cold War impacted Africa on many fronts, forcing regional players to take sides. The bipolar world in Africa fueled hostilities and provided additional access to weapons and training on both sides. Increased tensions over the potential spread of communism incited western nations to support either a standing government or the rebels based on their cause. The combination of these challenges made it very difficult for the U.S. to plan and implement a coherent engagement policy with African nations for fear of endorsing an illegitimate government or supporting a government that suppressed the needs of its people.

Civil warfare during the last half century resulted in a number of unresolved root issues. The placement of borders in Africa by colonial powers crossed multiple tribal and ethnic lines, dividing and grouping populations in a seemingly arbitrary manner. The last barriers to all out warfare due purely to tribal pressures were removed when the colonial governments extricated from their rule. Open tribal warfare in some areas continues unabated. Modern flash points exist in several disputed border areas. Ethiopia and Eritrea have clashed over disputed border regions, and Chad and Sudan have repeatedly quarreled over accusations of supporting rebel groups operating within each others borders. Fault lines are still prevalent along ethnic, tribal and religious differences. The

Democratic Republic of Congo recently experienced another series of intense fighting in the eastern portion of the nation partly due to tribal tensions.²³ Islam is the prevailing faith in North Africa while Sub-Saharan Africa predominately practices Christianity. The U.S. brokered peace between Islamic North Sudan and Christian-based Southern Sudan has a number of resolutions that are pending action in the first part of 2009 without visible signs of effort by either side to meet their obligations.²⁴ These quarrels have deep roots in cultural differences based on religious practices and traditions, and they do not hold much hope for near-term resolutions. These areas will more than likely experience greater violence before peace ensues.

In the last decade, Africa has made encouraging but uneven progress in providing better governance and improving the quality of life for its people. During a keynote address in July 2008 at the U.S.-Africa Sister Cities Conference in Lansing Michigan, Claudia E. Anyaso poignantly shared with the audience that over the last 10 years, “two-thirds of sub-Sahara Africa’s 48 countries have held free elections.”²⁵ Democratic reform in countries such as Ghana and South Africa has established firm roots within their political practices. In 2006, Benin enjoyed the country’s second consecutive non-violent turnover of the government following nation-wide elections. Personal freedom and national unity have not been universal but there are signs of progress and hope. Better government has led to improvements in education and health care in nations such as Ethiopia and Uganda.

²³ Severine Autesserre, “The Trouble with Congo,” *Foreign Affairs*, Volume 87, Issue 3, (May/June 2008), 96.

²⁴ Andrew S. Natsios, “Beyond Darfur,” *Foreign Affairs*, Volume 87, Issue 3, (May/June 2008), 78.

²⁵ Claudia E. Anyaso, Director, Office of Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs, Keynote address at the U.S.-Africa Sister Cities Conference in Lansing Michigan, *U.S.-Africa Relations: Building Alliances through Trade, Education, Culture, Diplomacy, Peace*, July 23 2008, <http://www.state.gov/p/af/rls/rm/2008/107586.htm> (accessed September 2, 2008).

Encouraged by the promise of reforming governments private investment is slowly reaching African nations to assist in transforming their economy which missed the affluent rise of the global economy. Conflict and poor governance in the 20th Century stifled African economic advancement. The corruption of African governments undermined progress through self-promotion at the expense of citizens, and undermined the establishment of any meaningful formal economic regulation. Africa's lucrative abundance of natural resources encouraged government corruption rather than the implementation of sound economic principles. Governments raised money through public sales of mineral reserves to buy arms and enrich themselves, often bribing other nations to accept non-intervention agreements in the internal affairs of their neighbors. Some foreign governments and businesses exploited the weakness of African institutions and maneuvered unmonitored in the murky transparency of the African banking industry. Africa also suffered greatly from its comfort with old informal systems and did not modernize its workforce or infrastructure. The people of Africa have profited little from their industrious labor and foresee little hope for progress in the near future. Providing for its citizens has been replaced by self-preservation for many government administrations. The political situation fosters an environment ripe for cases of human atrocities.

Recently, Africa has shown some positive signs of recovering from many years of abuse. The economic growth rate has steadily increased over the past two years, yet it remains to be seen if Africa can sustain the growth over a longer period. Economic progress is not uniform across the continent and experts attribute the Gross Domestic Product growth to hydrocarbon sales rather than the implementation of sound policies.

Unfortunately, this makes progress vulnerable to setbacks because progress is isolated to only a few countries and is tied to a single source of revenue.²⁶ The revenue that does exist is at risk due to poor management and weak financial institutions, or it is lost to public use due to corruption. Weak financial systems in Africa struggle to make sound fiscal reforms, and any encouraging signs are considered progress on a continent where the majority of people live in poverty. The United Nations goal to reduce poverty by 50% by the year 2015 is in jeopardy in Africa. “Between 1990 and 2001 the number of people living on less than \$1 a day rose from 227 million to 313 million, and the poverty rate rose from 45 percent of the population to 46%”.²⁷ Significant improvements are needed in infrastructure, currency stabilization and trade agreements in order to transform Africa into a more viable member of the global economy. The potential to improve social systems such as health care, education and public safety relies in part on the success of economic reforms, regional cooperation and sustained growth.

Africa has experienced enormous challenges in realizing social progress, enforcing human rights, and countering the damaging impact of demographic trends. The people of Africa have long have suffered egregious violations of human rights, encountered humanitarian crisis of epic proportions, and experienced wide-spread demographic strife. The majority of African nations have pre-industrial, agrarian-based economies that have endured years of disastrous economic policy and a climate change that is slowly encroaching on fertile lands to make them unproductive. Failing to make suitable advancements in daily living conditions Africans have increasingly migrated to

²⁶ Lake and Whitman, 110.

²⁷ United Nations, UN Millennium Project, Chapter 2, “Where we stand with only a decade to go,” in *Investing in Development: A Practical Plan to Achieve the Millennium Development Goals* (London: Earthscan, 2005).

cities in hopes of finding work and conditions more favorable for raising families. The mass migration to cities has created densely populated urban areas that suffer from suboptimal housing, poor sanitation, and non-existent health codes. These areas serve as a constant battleground against pandemic diseases spread through human to human contact.

The demographic pressures on Africa have exasperated massive refugee problems caused by government oppression, civil war or tribal genocide. A crisis in one nation often spills over into adjacent countries through refugee relocation. The migration of one tribe or clan to another area often incites further chaos as new tensions are borne. The crisis in Rwanda in 1993 created the exodus of over one million Hutus to other nations. The Hutus arrival in Congo helped create disharmony in eastern portions of the nation that continue today. The widespread genocide in Sudan has created a constantly shifting refugee problem and has required the involvement of the AU, UN and a significant focus of its African neighbors.²⁸ Other national or tribal conflicts commonly originated over precious resources such as water and fertile land. Relations between Ethiopia and Egypt have been tense over water in the Nile River basin and disputes have carried forward until today. In 2007, a Population Reference Bureau report estimated that Africa's urban population alone will grow from its present 294 million to 742 million by 2030.²⁹ The increase in urban population creates a great demand on the environment because people consume more energy, water and food; the increase in consumption in turn adds to

²⁸ Natosis, "Beyond Darfur," 79.

²⁹ Population Reference Bureau, *World Population Highlights: Key Findings From PRB's 2007 World Population Data Sheet*, Population Bulletin, Vol. 62, No. 3, September 2007, <http://www.prb.org/Articles/2007/623Urbanization.aspx> (accessed January 18, 2009), 10.

pollution of the environment and ill health conditions.³⁰ Deforestation, food shortages and climate change threaten to compound the problem and add incentive to migratory populations in search of better quality of life. Regardless of the cause, Africa continues to see the relocation of an overwhelmingly large portion of its population in an attempt to gain access to better resources or to separate itself from both violence and hardship.

Based partly as a response to counter these trends, Africa formed a series of regional alliances and organizations to promote security and stability through political, social and economic means. The organizations vary in terms of strength and influence based on member participation, governing authorities and international recognition. For example, the African Union (AU) represents every nation on the continent except Morocco and is responsible for spreading greater stability in the region. It has employed the military forces of member nations to keep peace in troubled areas. Its history of poor performance as a peacemaker or peacekeeper has captured the attention of critics. But recent trends indicate that the AU may provide a more positive role in conflict prevention. Unfortunately, Africa has many more consumers of peacekeepers than contributors. The AU is joined by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) which is focused on regional economic policy and stability, and the African Ready Force which is focused on security. Since each of these organizations will play a role in the future of Africa, crafting complementary USG efforts in cooperation with them is critical to any long term strategic success.

³⁰ Ibid., 10.

Limitations to American Power

The past two administrations have demonstrated U.S. determination to invest in the regional growth, stability and prosperity of Africa. President Clinton and President Bush both increased aid to Africa during their administrations, nearly doubling what America had pledged in the past.³¹ In spite of noble intentions, America increasingly finds itself challenged to sustain foreign aid to Africa on a consistent level. Factors contributing to the strategic limits on American foreign policy include a diminished diplomatic capacity compared to demand, a souring economy, and the commitments of military forces in various theaters of operation. If America wants to invest heavily in diplomacy, development and defense in Africa, policy makers will need to realize the limits and trade-offs of implementing a balanced policy with limited means. Continuing with this line of logic, a comprehensive solution will require greater emphasis on cooperation and synchronization of the separate USG agencies involved in national security strategy.

Following the end of the Cold War, the growth of nations coupled with budget reductions meant U.S. diplomatic capacity began losing ground and has failed to keep up with demand. The collapse of the Soviet Union created several countries that required the formation of new diplomatic missions. Instability in the Balkans, Philippines and in Africa required greater attention and commitment of U.S. resources. The continuing importance of Middle East countries and the promotion of peace between Israel-Palestine mandated increased diplomatic focus. The USG did not stand idly by and watch the changes without taking action but its adjustments were slow to initiate and did not fully meet the challenge. Under former Secretary of State Colin Powell, the U.S. made a

³¹ Lake and Whitman, 6.

dramatic investment in building additional capacity in its diplomatic service.

Unfortunately, the gains were quickly absorbed in commitments to existing understaffed embassies and did not result in a significant overall growth in diplomatic capacity.³² As further evidence of this fact, the U.S. Agency for International Development has nearly doubled its budget since 1990, but its manning has been reduced from 3,500 to 2,200 to administer aid worldwide.³³ The U.S. has been required to invest heavily in Iraq and Afghanistan to meet reconstruction and stability needs in both countries. As Secretary of Defense Gates has continually emphasized, “the problem is not will; it is capacity.”³⁴ Recognizing the length of the irregular war being waged against western ideals throughout the world and physically played out in battlefields in Iraq and Afghanistan, the U.S. embarked on a program to enlarge and strengthen its diplomatic corps under Secretary Rice during the Bush Administration. The U.S. Department of State plans to grow over 1000 new positions in 2009. While offering partial relief to a stressed diplomatic corps, new Foreign Service Officers will still need time to develop core competencies, refine their statecraft and widen cultural understanding. Under its current design, the planned growth may not pay dividends for several years.

Even as the corps of professional diplomats broadens, the U.S. faces a continuous imbalance between civilian and military elements representing and implementing American security initiatives. The Department of Defense (DOD) is augmenting key billets within American embassies and department directorates, coordinating foreign

³² Thomas Boyatt, Project Chairman, *A Foreign Affairs Budget for the Future: Fixing the Crisis in Diplomatic Readiness* (Washington DC: The American Academy of Diplomacy, October 2008), 3.

³³ *Ibid.*, 4.

³⁴ Robert M. Gates, Remarks as delivered to Center for Strategic and International Studies, Washington D.C., January 26, 2008, <http://www.defenselink.mil/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=1211> (accessed October 3, 2008).

military assistance, and filling other non-core tasks simply because Defense has the personnel and training to fill current shortfalls. DoD personnel are skilled in strategic, long-term planning and they are quickly gaining a deeper cultural awareness based on their recent experiences while augmenting other staffs. DoD members are not alone in augmenting embassy staffs, particularly those in Africa which contain a dynamic combination of personnel from across the interagency community. The Environmental Protection Agency is active in Africa to promote eco-friendly economic policies; the Department of Treasury is actively assisting African nations to establish fiscal regulation and effective currency control; and the Department of Justice is hard at work assisting developing court and judicial systems. While facing differences in agency cultures and an obvious disparity in resources, all government agencies will increasingly need to work more collaboratively to achieve overall national security objectives in Africa.

The extent of America's willingness and ability to enter into the realm of world politics begins at home with domestic stability. The destabilization of the U.S. markets in the fall of 2008 and its impact on the U.S. economy potentially signals tough times ahead for countries receiving American foreign aid. Former President Bush and President Obama have both spoken on record reiterating continued U.S. commitment to foreign assistance regardless of the financial crisis. Despite reassurances, history shows that official government assistance has gone down in most donor nations during previous times of turmoil.³⁵ The USG barely managed to maintain its commitments of aid during the dotcom industry failure in 2001 and 2002, but the circumstances were different from today's crisis. The government assistance to Wall Street embodied in the \$700 billion

³⁵ Relief Web, *Global: Financial crisis could cut official aid by 30%*, <http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/rwb.nsf/db900sid/LSGZ-7L5D2K?OpenDocument> (accessed November 11, 2008).

“bailout” has created additional strains on government spending. The U.S. is facing the burden of financing military action in both Iraq and Afghanistan simultaneously. Estimates for spending range from \$8 to \$10 billion per month depending on the metrics used. In the best case scenario, it is likely for aid to remain constant, which indicates a genuine decline in real growth when factoring for inflation. In the weeks leading up to the American Presidential election in November 2008, vice-presidential candidate Joe Biden admitted that the Obama’s campaign pledge to increase foreign aid by \$50 billion would “probably be slowed down” by virtue of spreading it over a longer period of time.³⁶ Budgeting adjustments and tactics such as this are common during times of economic crisis and slowdown.

The economic crises will likely result in greater scrutiny towards official government support of traditional international organizations and direct lending practices. The U.S. is the largest annual contributor to the UN averaging in excess of \$4 billion. U.S. contributions directly fund administrative costs, UN peacekeeping operations and a host of support agencies such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund.³⁷ The U.S. used these contributions in the past to wield influence as a large-donating nation to stipulate changes in lending practices. The U.S. sought a more conservative approach to lending to reduce risks of defaulting and to promote more cost-effective projects.³⁸ Many of the principle countries receiving aid from these organizations are in Africa and they will see their aid affected indirectly by U.S. will and influence.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Luisa Blanchfield, *CRS Report for Congress: United Nations Reform: U.S. Policy and International Perspectives*, Washington: Congressional Research Service, January 22, 2007, <http://fpc.state.gov/documents/organization/81994.pdf> (accessed November 12, 2008), 1.

³⁸ Ibid, 8.

In addition to economic capacity, military capacity also impacts or limits our ability to provide foreign assistance. The U.S. military is stretched to a point of imbalance based on support of current operations and ongoing participation in homeland security requirements. Since 9/11, the U.S. military has experienced more frequent, lengthy deployments placing an increased strain on our forces. Although troop levels in Iraq are expected to decrease over the next year, the relief to our force caused by the reduction will be marginalized by an expected rise in military forces dedicated to Afghanistan. The units that are not deployed are operating on a cycle that allows a short recovery period, immediately followed by preparation for subsequent deployments. The Pentagon readily admits that the dwell time for many Active Duty, National Guard and Reserve units is below stated goals.³⁹ As highlighted in the 2008 Army Posture Statement, normal training cycles are disrupted by these undeniably justified, but intensely consuming obligations. Adding to the stress, many units are preparing for missions they were not originally organized or assigned to execute. For example, Army artillery and engineer units are training and executing infantry-type tasks while securing the local populace and villages in their assigned sectors within Iraq and Afghanistan.

Based on current obligations, the U.S. military lacks the flexibility to adequately conduct exercises and deployments in support of combatant commanders outside of the Central Command Area of Responsibility. COCOMs are employing smaller, tailorable packages with specified limits on mission scope and duration to meet their Theater Security Cooperation objectives. Most importantly, the constraints imposed by force commitments in one area limit the ability to execute capacity building programs for U.S.

³⁹ U.S. Department of Defense, *A Statement on the Posture of the United States Army 2008*, submitted to Committees and Subcommittees of the Senate and House of Representatives, 2d Session, 110th Congress (Washington DC, February 26, 2008), 3.

partner nations elsewhere. At home, Service Chiefs contemplate ways to recapitalize equipment, implement proposed force structure changes, and train units to meet adversaries distinctively different from the present-day fight in Iraq and Afghanistan. In the near term, DoD leadership faces difficult tradeoffs between sustaining the fight, modernizing its force and maintaining institutional commitments to training.

In Africa, the U.S. has established a strategy that takes into consideration a number of unique variables: American security objectives, a measured supply of means in which to carry them out and the fundamental needs of Africa. U.S. policy objectives in Africa consist of the following:

- 1) support political freedom and democracy,
- 2) expand economic opportunities and growth,
- 3) fight infectious disease,
- 4) end wars and combat terror and violence, and
- 5) increase mutual understanding through cultural and educational exchanges.⁴⁰

At U.S. embassies and other American institutions serving Africa, there are leaders, staff and support personnel representing almost every federal department that are focused on achieving these objectives. Besides the standup of AFRICOM, DoD has two operational headquarters active on the continent: Joint Task Force Horn of Africa (JTFHOA) and Operation Enduring Freedom Trans Sahel (OEF-TS). Both military task forces work with local governments to combat terrorism and increase security. A number of private Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO) based in the U.S. also work to help the cause of African people and nations. The number of public and private entities operating in Africa requires cooperation and the synchronization of collective efforts, or at a minimum, the

⁴⁰ Anyaso, *U.S.-Africa Relations*.

situational awareness of each other's mission so as not to cause disruption or duplication of effort.

State and Non-state Stakeholders in Africa

One final aspect of assessing the strategic environment in Africa is acknowledging the presence of the many other stakeholders in African affairs. China, India, as well as other international players have interests in Africa, and implement their own policies to gain access to resources, improve economic ties and increase international stature by expanding strategic influence. China has invested heavily in African nations that produce the natural resources the Chinese need to sustain their economic growth. Former U.S. Treasury Secretary Henry Paulson acknowledged the effectiveness of Chinese diplomacy in Africa by citing their successful Forum on China-Africa Cooperation which included nearly 50 African countries attending.⁴¹ In 2008, Beijing committed to doubling its aid to Africa by 2010.⁴² Many African nations take advantage of the infusion of Chinese currency into their government. They also enjoy the fact that Chinese investments do not come with stipulations for government reforms commonly referenced in aid from western nations. India has found Africa to be the ideal setting for its exercise of influence and strength in the international community as a growing major power. Indian investments have exploded in Africa, many designed to feed an Indian economy quickly becoming known for its technological superiority. Admittedly, the U.S. relationship with competitors does not need to be adversarial in

⁴¹ Henry M. Paulson Jr., "A Strategic Economic Environment: Strengthening U.S.-Chinese Ties," *Foreign Affairs*, Volume 87, No. 5 (September/October 2008), <http://www.foreignaffairs.org/20080901faeassay87504/henry-m-paulson-jr/a-strategic-economics> (accessed December 8, 2008).

⁴² Ibid.

nature; however, the USG must acknowledge that strategic decisions in Africa will likely impact the relationship the U.S. has with nations in other regions.

Africa is inundated with international support agencies providing economic advice and capital investment across the continent. The World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) routinely invest in African affairs and regularly advise African political and economic leaders. Recent World Bank and IMF efforts in Africa have centered on debt relief for previous loans issued by both institutions. The Group of Eight's agenda in 2004 included detailed focus on the progression of Africa in the global economy.⁴³ Member nations pledged additional activities to promote greater stability and development in the region. Without exception, the investment of large sums of money by international organizations into cash-strapped African nations gains the attention of African government leaders.

On the humanitarian front, NGOs possessing charters for social change are active in Africa as well. Organizations with missions to raise awareness of gender inequity, child protection laws and expression of religious freedom operate tirelessly on the continent. For example, the UN has operated several organizations and programs in the region since its inception. The UN is joined by independent non-profit organizations such as Doctors Without Borders, Amnesty International, Refugee International and several faith-based entities. These organizations are dedicated to providing services to address the specific needs of groups outside the scope of meager African government capacity. Partly as a result of extensive food programs and improved health care systems, Africa will experience a population surge in the next few years as fewer children die from

⁴³ The White House, *Sea Island Summit 2004*, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/g8/2004/print/index.html> (accessed January 1, 2009).

hunger and modern medicine is brought into targeted areas. The surge will place new and increasing demands on both public and private organizations to prevent states from collapsing and a further decline in living conditions. While the nation-state will continue to serve as the basis for order and support in Africa, the influence of non-state actors will only continue to intensify in the region.

Since the 1960s the United Nations has had a presence on the African continent in the form of a peacekeeping force. Recently, the UN force in the Democratic Republic of Congo, the single largest concentration of forces currently deployed by the UN, received criticism for its failure to halt aggression by renegade parties.⁴⁴ The international community faces calls from private industry and some nations to act more aggressively in combating piracy in the waters off Somalia, something no specific nation seems eager to tackle directly alone. Any action taken to combat piracy by the UN or individual nations will undoubtedly affect Africa.

These organizations and others are present on the African political and socio-economic landscape for the foreseeable future. Any attempt to implement policy by the U.S. will undeniably complement, or run counter to their objectives.

Summary

U.S. policy makers will face ongoing and new challenges as they attempt to shape the African landscape to the advantage of American interests. A number of divisive and deeply rooted issues remain in Africa; poor governance, ethnic turmoil, demographic shifts, inadequate environmental protection and health capacities. Without the

⁴⁴ “UN Peacekeepers attacked in Congo”, *British Broadcasting Company*, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/7745495.stm> (accessed December 6, 2008).

introduction of credible solutions, Africa will fail to develop or even continue to deteriorate. The U.S. does not act alone when helping Africa address its problems and must remain cognizant of the many international competitors for influence in Africa. Adding to the difficulty of competing in Africa, the limitations of U.S. resources will become a factor in any conversation concerning foreign aid and additional military commitments. The U.S. can not help resolve any of these concerns using a single, straight-forward solution. The current strategic environment requires cooperation, understanding, and willingness to try new approaches to old problems.

CHAPTER THREE – APPLYING SMART POWER IN AFRICA:

WHY SOFT POWER VICE HARD POWER?

But my message today is not about the defense budget or military power. My message is that if we are to meet the myriad challenges around the world in the coming decades, this country must strengthen other important elements of national power both institutionally and financially, and create the capability to integrate and apply all of the elements of national power to problems and challenges abroad. In short, based on my experience serving seven presidents, as a former Director of CIA and now as Secretary of Defense, I am here to make the case for strengthening our capacity to use “soft” power and for better integrating it with “hard” power.

- *Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates, November 26, 2007*⁴⁵

Introduction

The concept of smart power has increasingly entered the American strategic lexicon through a myriad of continuous and diverse dialogues concerning America’s grand strategy. From congressional hearings and political debates to professional journals and Sunday morning talk shows, there is growing recognition of the need for better synchronization of hard and soft power elements to achieve U.S. national security objectives. This does not imply that there is an equal balance of each element applied simultaneously. Nor does it imply that the U.S. can effectively wield each element in every given scenario. It is the strategic balance of hard and soft power elements applied in the right proportion at the right time that determines the ultimate success of U.S. strategy.

Hard power is traditionally used when situations warrant threats or coercion to get others to comply with intended outcomes. Typically referred to as “sticks”, a nation can use either their military or economic superiority to impose their will on a second nation.

⁴⁵ Robert M. Gates, Remarks delivered at Landon Lecture, Kansas State University, Manhattan Kansas, November 26, 2007, <http://www.defenselink.mil/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=1199> (accessed November 14, 2008).

The first form of hard power is the deliberate use or the threat of military action.⁴⁶ The U.S. military provides a tremendous arsenal to exercise hard power as evidenced by recent operational success in Iraq, Afghanistan and the Philippines. The military is a professional, civilian-controlled force which has a superior technological advantage over traditional nation-state adversaries. A second form of hard power is to threaten to impose, or actually implement economic sanctions with the intention of forcing a target nation to comply with demands. These methods place a receiving nation in a precarious position to either accept the specified terms or risk significant repercussions. A third method of using hard power is the use of inducements, or “carrots”, to affect the behavior of others.⁴⁷ This form of hard power is by and large a direct monetary payment or compensation through the delivery of goods and services to entice the recipient to show a specific behavior. For example, U.S. military hardware could be given to a country in exchange for access to its ports and airfields.

In spite of tremendous American hard power resources, USG officials concede that the military cannot accomplish national security objectives alone, nor does the U.S. have an unlimited budget to meet strategic ends using the hard power approach. The weakened U.S. economy may directly impact the fiscal ability of the U.S. to singlehandedly vie for strategic outcomes, but it still summons a tremendous capacity to expend capital on national security priorities. America’s hard power is fairly rigid, with deviations normally occurring appropriately with significant changes in national resources and over extended time periods.

⁴⁶ Joseph S. Nye Jr., *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics* (New York: Public Affairs, 2004), 5.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

A controversial perspective, but one shared by many policymakers, practitioners and academics, is that U.S. foreign policy since 9/11, with its reliance on hard power tactics, has resulted in a shift in the relative strength of American soft power. America's protectionist policies since 9/11 and the hard power tactics used in response to terrorism have had the unintended consequence of temporarily diminishing U.S. soft power. Since 2002, trends indicate a decline in image for the U.S. with 26 of 33 countries having lower favorable ratings of America.⁴⁸ The U.S. military response in Afghanistan was initially supported by world opinion and subsequently reinforced by direct military support from many NATO countries. The reinforcements signaled a continued support for those operations. In contrast, the U.S. entry into Iraq was met with greater scrutiny and international condemnation, save for a few hardline U.S. supporters. The global response was readily apparent in the PEW polls conducted in the years following the initiation of operations in Iraq. In 2004, a preponderance of respondents in surveys said they had less confidence that the U.S. is trustworthy and that the U.S. routinely acts with no regard to her allies' best interests.⁴⁹

Hard power tactics exercised in the U.S. led Global War on Terrorism (GWOT) were not the only factor that caused a decline in favorable world opinion. The USG's implementation of new immigration laws and security checks for travelers into the U.S. caused additional friction in the international community and met harsh criticism. The resistance to close Guantanamo Bay has tarnished an image that traditionally portrayed the U.S. as a champion of human rights. Many nations interpreted the U.S. actions as a

⁴⁸ 2007 Pew Global Attitudes Survey, *Rising Environmental Concern in 47-Nation Survey: Global Unease with Major World Powers* (Washington D.C., June 27, 2007) 3.

⁴⁹ 2004 Pew Global Attitudes Project, *A Year After the Iraq War: Mistrust of America in Europe Higher, Muslim Anger Persists* (Washington D.C., March 16, 2004) 1-8.

denial of the right to a fair trial, a principle that remains a cornerstone of U.S. foreign policy. From the perspective of the international community, America's actions demonstrate a break from a historical policy calling for international support for liberty, justice and the promotion of human rights.

Soft power is intended to use the allure of "attraction" to influence others to work toward the same outcome without the need to resort to threats, coercion or payments. Dr. Joseph Nye of Harvard University originally coined the phrase "soft power" in 1990 and has spent the majority of the last two decades refining the concept and promoting its ideals.⁵⁰ The basic premise of soft power is that most people/nations do not want to be coerced into accepting an idea proposed by another party; most want to choose freely based on the intrinsic value of the idea itself. In order to get a specified outcome, a country designates a desired endstate and entices others to aspire to the same outcome. In theory, soft power is meant to be less intrusive and inherently less confrontational.

There are a number of peculiarities that are associated with possessing and wielding soft power. First, the success of soft power partially depends on the willingness of the receiver to accept the intended outcome. If a nation is adamantly opposed to the intended outcome, no manner of soft power will probably convince them otherwise. Second, soft power must be continually monitored for interpretation by the recipient and then adjusted as necessary to achieve the intended outcome. Third, soft power is normally expected to take longer to achieve the outcome because it takes more time for a recipient to recognize the intended outcome, realize it desires the same thing and take action. Finally, the amount of soft power that a country holds fluctuates with national,

⁵⁰ Nye, *Soft Power*, XI.

regional and world opinion.⁵¹ Interestingly enough, the approval ratings of the U.S. dropped only slightly in Africa and have begun to climb back towards their historically high levels.

In Africa, the conditions are favorable for the U.S. to use soft power to build additional influence in the region based on the success of expanding current initiatives. The U.S. earns respect and admiration by building on previously enacted policies, the unmistakable allure of economic opportunity and the strength of American culture. The U.S. has successfully enacted policies, programs and initiatives to entice African nations to improve governance, become increasingly self-reliant and forge development that will help their people prosper. The implementation of these ambitious goals suggests there is great potential for expanding the depth, reach and effectiveness of U.S. softpower in Africa. Any strategic plans for involvement in Africa should minimize hard power because it is ill suited to address the specific needs of the region and will further complicate our goals for a coherent and consistent strategy. Introducing hard power as the lead element after successful use of soft power programs would signal a dramatic departure in this region without cause or provocation.

Conditions Conducive for Wielding U.S. Soft Power

Regardless of dispiriting opinions regarding recent decisions by the USG on the conduct of U.S. foreign policy, the views towards American ideals and culture remain largely positive in Africa. Positive feelings toward the United States are strongly attributable to what America stands for, not necessarily how America has acted in the world. As such, the U.S. has a unique opportunity to actively engage Africa with a strategy

⁵¹ Center for Strategic and International Studies, *CSIS Commission on Smart Power*, 5-14.

based on the success of current soft power initiatives, the draw of Africans to live and study in America and the popularity of American culture.

During its past two presidential terms, the Bush Administration increased aid and initiated several soft power type programs in Africa gaining the trust and admiration of African leaders and the general public. The single most successful program was the President's Emergency Plan for Aids Relief (PEPFAR). Twelve of PEPFAR's fifteen target countries are in Africa which makes Africa the greatest beneficiary of the \$15 million committed to the program.⁵² In its first year of operation to curb the spread of HIV and prevent mother-to-child transmission, 42 million women received medication, preventing an estimated 47,100 transmissions to infants.⁵³ The significance of the program resounds throughout the African continent where an estimated 22 million people are infected with AIDS, nearly 67% of the worlds reported cases.⁵⁴ The disease is particularly acute in Southern Africa where an estimated 35% of the adult population is infected. In 2007 alone, estimates indicate that over 11 million African children under 18 were orphaned as a result of AIDS.⁵⁵ Until more is known about the disease and a vaccine is discovered, the PEPFAR program is essential to stemming the rise of transmission through existing medical treatment, education and lobbying foreign governments for effective policies. America is widely praised both for its own commitment of resources and its ability to seek public and private donors throughout the world to stem the spread of AIDS in Africa.

⁵² Anyaso, "U.S.-Africa Relations."

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/Aids, *2008 Report on the Global AIDS Epidemic*, Executive Study, New York, July 2008, 5.

⁵⁵ Ibid., 21.

A second humanitarian program receiving equal praise and appreciation from Africa is the U.S. initiative to eliminate malaria on the continent. In June 2005, President Bush announced the plan to spend \$1.2 billion over 5 years to reduce malaria deaths worldwide by 50%, mainly in Sub-Saharan Africa.⁵⁶ The world suffers over 1 million deaths annually from malaria of which 90% are primarily African youth under the age of 5 years.⁵⁷ The U.S. embarked on a campaign to raise awareness of the disease through education, and offered simple solutions for prevention such as bed nets. The U.S. has initiated similar programs designed to combat other infectious diseases in Africa as a means to improve the quality of life and prevent the transfer of diseases outside the continent. These humanitarian acts enhance American soft power in Africa by improving the government's ability to care for its citizens. The U.S. is building capacity in Africa as a means to avert future dependency on outside entities to combat endemic diseases. These programs highlight an American commitment to act on specific policy goals which in turn reinforce the U.S. image as an effective world leader.

The influx of African immigrants into America on a permanent or temporary basis is further evidence of the U.S.'s strong standing and can positively impact the future of Africa. America ranks as one of the most preferred destinations for immigrants from Africa. According to the Office of Immigration, 346,000 people obtained legal permanent status in the U.S. from Africa; from 2000-2007, the total exceeded 536,000. Africa has established itself as a region boasting the highest percentage of people filing refugee and asylee as reasons for wishing admission into the U.S. – more than double any

⁵⁶ The White House, Fact Sheet, *U.S. Africa Policy: An Unparalleled Partnership Strengthening Democracy, Overcoming Poverty, and Saving Lives* (February 14, 2008), <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2008/02/20080214-11.html> (accessed September 2, 2008).

⁵⁷ Zakaria, Tabassum, "Bush Offers More Aid to Fight Malaria in Africa," *Reuters*, February 18, 2008, <http://www.reuters.com/article/topnews/idUSL1846810520080218> (accessed December 1, 2008).

other region in 2004 and a full one-third of refugee arrivals in 2007.⁵⁸ We can infer that newly established citizens are supportive of U.S. values and ideals, and that they use this rationale as a reason for their new citizenship. They are unintentional participants in the spread of American ideals by virtue of their care for human rights, freedom of choice and being a member of a pluralistic government.

A more conscious participant in fostering the ideals of human freedom are students involved in international student exchanges. America leads the world by hosting over 25% of all foreign students studying abroad.⁵⁹ African students make America one of their top two locations to pursue an education outside of the continent - Europe is the top destination for African students. In 2007, nearly 10% of all Africans obtaining a temporary Visa entered the U.S. for purposes of academic study and student exchange.⁶⁰ While not a large number, Africa has the greatest percentage of nonimmigrant people arriving in the U.S. for study as a portion of the total entering the U.S., and the percentage continues to rise. For example, Nigeria ranks 20th in terms of the number of students entering the U.S. The total number of people from Nigeria studying in America has increased threefold in the last ten years.⁶¹ While they study and live in the U.S. these students are exposed to concepts of civil liberties, free speech, advancement in women's rights and other human dignities strongly supported by democratic nations. Students return to their countries of origin with a new perspective on the activities of responsible government, a sense of value for strong public institutions, and a greater understanding of

⁵⁸ U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Office of Immigration Statistics, *2007 Report on Immigration*, Tables 2 and 14.

⁵⁹ United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, *Tertiary Students Abroad: Learning Without Borders*, Institute for Statistics: February, 2005, 1-2.

⁶⁰ Department of Homeland Security, *2007 Report on Immigration*, Table 28, 76.

⁶¹ Institute of International Education, *Open Doors 2008, Nigeria Country Background*, November 17, 2008.

private enterprise and a free market. The hope is that these graduates will attain a position of prominence in their own nations, possibly rising to a level of leadership impacting a community or region. As a way of comparison, the number of American students studying in Africa is small, mostly because nearly one-third of African countries are listed on the State Department's travel advisory list. In other ways, African academic institutions have shown an inability to support exchange programs in their own countries. They tend to be inwardly focused and lack the resources for large scale marketing of academic opportunities.

A final manner in which the U.S. gains soft power is through the intrinsic value of American culture. The U.S. is almost universally admired for its technological innovation – and sometimes criticized for its stiff technology exportation rules as well. Many people in the world are intrigued by American pop culture in the form of movies, music and sports. These venues serve as informal methods of transferring important political messages. A popular song or movie can convey important themes such as the strength of the free market, the value of individual liberty and the importance of integrity in government. The U.S. has constructively wielded this effective tool through government media organizations such as Voice of America (VOA). The Voice of Africa is a government-sponsored activity reaching an extended audience in Africa with news and information about the U.S. Part of its charter is to present the Administration's policies to targeted audiences. A recent VOA initiative launched a program in Somali language to reach specific targeted areas of concern in Eastern Africa.⁶² As an example of modern technology, the VOA has capitalized on the popularity of the internet to spread

⁶² Voice of America-Africa, *VOA Charter*, <http://www.voanews.com/english/About/index.cfm> (accessed December 14, 2008).

the appeal of freedom and democracy. The deliberate use of VOA in Africa is based in part on former Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev aides' claims that that Russian exposure to American music and movies complicated communist official's efforts to retain control in the early 1980s.⁶³ A major drawback of pop culture as a means of soft power is that the government does not control the message outside of sponsored sites. Hollywood, New York, Nashville and the like do not adhere to government requests to place political messages in their products that directly address target nations.

Effective diplomacy ensures private endeavors such as the sale of American products, the promotion of high cultural events and the endorsement of scientific exchanges reach African nations. American brands often dominate global markets – think Coke, Pepsi or McDonalds. Once again, the introduction of these everyday items to African cultures can underline important concepts that unsuspectingly attract people to American ideals. Product diversity attracts people to the concept of choice and promotes the free market in economic development. The role of educated women in the workplace and their contributions to society outside the home can be portrayed in a theatrical performance or demonstrated through philanthropic endeavors such as Oprah Winfrey's establishment of a private school for girls in Africa. The discourse among scientist exchanged during the course of joint studies on a common problem can expose the people of Africa to new ideas that would not otherwise be generated in an isolated group of African participants. The diversity of collaborative programs serves as an example of African potential when working in the global community.

Collectively, government sponsored programs, the exposure of Africans in the U.S. to the ideals and principles of good governance, and Africa's contact with American

⁶³ Nye, *Soft Power*, 49.

culture contribute to a strong sense of U.S. soft power. According to the 2007 Pew Global Attitudes Survey, nine of the top eleven countries with favorable opinions of the U.S. were from Africa; three had a more positive opinion of the U.S. than American citizens had of their own country.⁶⁴ Only government sponsored programs like PEPFAR are afforded a place in formal strategic guidance, but accomplishments through the other elements that make up U.S. soft power must be acknowledged for their contributions. Admittedly, not every nation indicating a favorable opinion of American ideals and culture is willing to support a spread of those ideals in their own nation. What it does indicate is a country's willingness to respond to the ideals and principles that America considers essential to forming secure and stable regions in Africa. The effective use of U.S. soft power has the ability to open doors where they would otherwise be closed, and to generate dialogue that otherwise would not take place if the U.S. only employed hard power tactics. Soft power techniques entice African leaders to positively engage with the U.S. on a host of issues including more fundamental problems in governance and economic development, while also improving the quality of life of African citizens.

Ongoing U.S. Initiatives that Underscore Soft Power

U.S. programs and initiatives foster soft power in Africa by raising public awareness on the continent to good governing practices, inspiring African self reliance, and promoting vitally needed political, economic and social development in the region. The military plays an active role in furthering soft power under the direction of AFRICOM's "Active Security" programs. Other improvements in developing African nations are a direct result of the establishment of the Millennium Challenge Corporation

⁶⁴ 2007 Pew Global Attitudes Survey, 3.

(MCC) in 2004. Both initiatives show signs of attracting African nations in a manner that encourages them to be more effective partners in maintaining regional security and stability, a long term objective of the U.S. on the continent.

As a new unified command, AFRICOM is expected to substantially contribute to the security and stability of Africa. The commander, General William E. Ward, recently explained to students at Boston University that the command was designed to address challenges in a non-traditional approach while fully engaging interagency partners and African governments.⁶⁵ The command integrated several civilian members of the State Department into the organization, including two of the most senior positions. The command continues to build its staff, assume responsibility for legacy programs from United States European Command and United States Central Command, and march forward with its own operationally-minded methodology.

AFRICOM is employing a series of programs that fall under a single underlying principle aptly named “Active Security”. The command is focused on a “persistent and sustained level of effort” to engage African nations and help resolve their needs. Their efforts are consistent with the patience required to invest in long-term relationships that are essential for successful implementation of soft power elements. For instance, AFRICOM has employed a number of smaller groups formed from specific military specialties from across the services that enter a country and help foster capacity building. Through combined exercises, these mobile teams train host nation participants on border security, counterterrorism and small unit tactics.⁶⁶ AFRICOM is also working with other

⁶⁵ U.S. Department of Defense, *Ward Engages With Boston University Students*, AFRICOM Public Affairs, October 22, 2008, <http://www.africom.mil/getArticle.asp?art=2229> (accessed December 14, 2008).

⁶⁶ Thomas P. Galvin and William E. Ward, “U.S. Africa Command and the Principle of Active Security,” *Joint Forces Quarterly*, Issue 51 (National Defense University Press: 4th Quarter, 2008), 63.

international partners to participate in African initiatives such as the Bamako Peacekeeping School in Malaya to build indigenous capabilities.⁶⁷ The intent is to partner with nations whose objectives are similar to the U.S. and to build the capacity of those we engage so that they eventually become self-supporting. Ironically, these programs use a traditional hard power instrument (the military) in a manner consistent with soft power methods to advance U.S. foreign policy objectives. The long term benefits include stronger ties to nations that have the same aspirations for Africa, a general growth in self-reliant African nations that can sustain their own security, and interaction with people who are attracted to the ideals and principles that embody good governance. AFRICOM's role is one piece of an overarching policy and does not represent a whole-of-government approach. Yet direct military-to-military programs are proving to generate positive soft power results.

The Millennium Challenge Account is a second U.S. initiative that entices nations to make positive reforms in governing practices, economic development plans and social systems. The MCA establishes a series of qualifying criteria that countries must meet in order to receive investments from the account. The program is distinctively different from other forms of foreign assistance in regards to qualifying terms, the potential amount of investment available to each qualifying nation, and the active participation of recipient nations in formulating a plan to spend the aid.⁶⁸ Assistance goes to nations that have set benchmarks for reform and have shown improvements that are deemed sustainable. The Millennium Challenge Board, appointed by the President and approved

⁶⁷ Ibid., 65.

⁶⁸ Shelia Herrling and Steve Radelet, "Modernizing U.S. Foreign Assistance for the Twenty-first Century," as contained in *The White House and the World*, editor Nancy Birdsall (Washington DC: Center for Global Development, August 22, 2008), 279.

by the U.S. Senate, utilizes selective indicators to determine the performance of nations seeking investment. In broad terms, the indicators fall under categories such as Ruling Justly, Encouraging Economic Freedom and Investing in People.⁶⁹ Countries are then judged in relation to their peers in each category to determine their eligibility for aid. Nations must perform above the median level in a majority of specific sub-categories in order to qualify, although the board does retain some discretionary authority in making a final decision.

The MCA's impact on African nations highlights the importance of soft power as a means to achieve significant advancements in severely challenged countries. Since its inception in 2002, ten African nations have signed agreements and several others have entered Threshold Programs because they show promise in meeting qualifying conditions in the future.⁷⁰ For example, the MCA-Mozambique agreement implemented a program to improve national water and sanitation services. The success of these incentive programs has served to meet preconditions that will spur additional investment in developing countries by the World Bank and others.⁷¹ The MCA's agreement with Ghana has created an abundance of diverse projects ranging from a small scale purchase of coolers for pineapple farms to bank reforms that have paved the way for government lending to rural banks and savings and loan programs.⁷² The success of the nations

⁶⁹ Millennium Challenge Corporation, *Report on the Criteria and Methodology for Determining the Eligibility of Candidate Countries for Millennium Challenge Account Assistance in Fiscal Year 2009*," <http://www.mcc.gov/selection/index.php> (accessed on January 2, 2009).

⁷⁰ James W. Fox and Lex Rieffel, *Strengthening the Millennium Challenge Corporation: Better results are Possible*, Brookings Institute: Washington DC: Brookings Institute, December 2008, 7.

⁷¹ Millennium Challenge Corporation, "Mozambique – Quarterly Status Report", <http://www.mcc/countries/index.php> (accessed on January 2, 2009).

⁷² Millennium Challenge Corporation, "Ghana – Quarterly Status Report," <http://www.mcc/countries/index.php> (accessed on January 2, 2009).

involved with MCA is highly visible and appealing to other African countries working to make similar political, economic and social changes.

The growth of American soft power in Africa is an ongoing process with new initiatives and programs introduced each year. While the principles employed by AFRICOM and the work of MCA represent two highly visible and successful forms of softpower, other forms can and must be developed because the issues that face Africa are not readily solved by the traditional use of hard power. We must leverage recent success with soft power to expand its use.

Soft Power Facilitates Proactive Peacetime Engagement with Africa

Soft power offers a number of distinct advantages over hard power as the basis for interacting with African nations. Soft power is inherently less confrontational than hard power, allowing for a more proactive U.S. policy in Africa without the fear of our actions being interpreted as provocative or threatening. As a less intrusive method to influence a nation, soft power initiatives are more likely to garner local support and potential assistance from international partners and non-government entities. The U.S. can work to effectively and efficiently attain its policy goals in Africa while simultaneously sharing the burden of fiscal and manpower costs.

Utilizing soft power provides a tremendous array of options to achieve U.S. strategic objectives without assuming a provocative posture or directly challenging the sovereignty of an African nation. Beginning with a soft power agenda allows the U.S. to make multiple adjustments to its strategy based on its effectiveness of each element without automatically committing to more intimidating tactics. The U.S. retains the

flexibility to integrate additional measures and initiatives without appearing indecisive or disconnected from African needs. If initial efforts to use soft power are unsuccessful, the U.S. can elect to increase the pressure through additional measures more directly associated with hard power tactics.

The choice to use soft power as a first step in Africa is more likely to encourage international participation and garner support for U.S. security and stability ambitions. Soft power is more palatable to potential international partners interested in contributing to regional security but who do not have the means or desire to use hard power. The 2006 National Security Strategy highlighted the willingness of the U.S. to act alone but specifically stated a desire to cooperate with allies and partners in order to uphold lasting solutions.⁷³ In regard to Africa, the NSS explained that, “Overcoming the challenges Africa faces requires partnership, not paternalism.”⁷⁴ Soft power initiatives are more prone to gain approval from alliances whose members may be divided over the use of military force or hardened sanctions. In early 2003, the U.S. worked diligently to gain a UN mandate for military intervention in Iraq. Most member nations called for the UN to wait until existing measures had more time to be effective. The U.S. along with a few staunch supporters proceeded with military action. The undersized coalition immediately received harsh criticism. The U.S. bore a significantly higher price in human loss and fiscal costs than if the international community had acted together. It is crucial that the U.S. enact policies in Africa that inspire other nations to share in the burden of security and stability to reduce the instances of unilateral action. Acting as part of an alliance, or

⁷³ The White House, *National Security Strategy*, 37.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

a coalition of the willing is important or even essential when the U.S. is fiscally constrained and stretched militarily.

A soft power approach facilitates the ongoing participation of NGOs in resolving African issues and provides a greater opportunity for private investment to aid in the development of a viable African economy. Africa's nearly continuous succession of internal conflicts and the horrid living conditions facing its people has captured the attention of world NGO leaders for decades. Today, there are an extraordinary number of non-government organizations and private institutions at work trying to improve the conditions in Africa. NGOs encouraged by the current use of U.S. soft power initiatives as the primary vehicle for our policy objectives continue to operate in the region. The introduction of hard power tactics in a particular nation or region would likely interrupt NGO operations and disrupts the flow of aid these groups offer to areas in need of assistance. While many NGOs willingly operate in unstable conditions, few can afford to work in a hostile environment where the safety of their staff and volunteers is at risk. The introduction of hard power in a country often incites violence and creates an inhospitable environment where neither NGOs nor private industry can function properly.

Ongoing soft power programs helps signal to private industry that the environment in a region is stable enough for investment. Establishing a stable environment and promoting economic growth in Africa is extremely costly and far too significant for any single nation to bear alone. The U.S. has led the way in advocating debt relief for African nations and has forgiven millions of dollars in loan repayments in order to free up capital for African governments to invest in their own future. It is in the best interest of the U.S to seek partners to provide additional capital investment for

infrastructure, modernization and financial reform. Once again, soft power programs such as the Millennium Challenge Account are breaking new ground by serving as a precursor for new investment and setting the conditions for additional private funding for African projects. Exchange programs designed to improve the professional banking industry in Africa through currency controls and finance reform are working.⁷⁵ Through measures such as these, private investment is climbing and will spread the financial burden for improving economic prosperity in Africa between foreign nations, businesses and African governments.

Hard Power Ill Suited to Address African Issues

Hard power is an effective tool when it is applied in appropriate situations and under circumstances that would improve the conditions it is directed against. The CSIS report on Smart Power explains, “the effectiveness of any power resource depends first on context.” When evaluating the challenges in Africa, few are reasonably suited for U.S. hard power solutions.

In Africa, the introduction of military threats or offensive operations, or even the imposition of economic sanctions, would likely create undesirable, negative secondary effects and quickly erode support for U.S. policy elsewhere in the region. In most instances, the U.S. would need to act unilaterally with hard power tactics or with a coalition comprised of willing nations. This is a difficult premise when confronted with the complexity of African issues and the myriad of interests that participating nations would need to satisfy. The use of hard power has significant drawbacks and potential risks that would preclude an optimal solution to these complex situations.

⁷⁵ Lake and Whitman, 109.

The U.S. experience in Somalia in 1993 illustrates some of the challenges associated with using hard power in Africa. U.S. troops initially deployed to Somalia to assist in the distribution of aid and to protect aid workers. U.S. military leaders arrived to find a worn torn nation with no functioning government, a starving populous and multiple Somali clans fighting to control sections of the country. The mission to secure and assist in the distribution of humanitarian aid changed to nation building, including the disarmament of gun-wielding clans. Despite a noble intention to aid the starving people of Somalia, the U.S. eventually realized the operation was based on a failed strategy: a lack of unity of effort and poor tactics. Attempts to complete the mission with hard power tactics did not end in success and eventually U.S. forces withdrew in 1994. The U.S. was not able to resolve the long term problems of Somalia's downward spiral into chaos. Somalia serves as one example where hard power techniques can not resolve deeply embedded political and cultural issues typically found in African nations.

The nature of conflict in Africa presents an interesting dilemma for any nation planning to exert influence utilizing hard power. As discussed earlier in the paper, most African conflicts are based on civil wars and military coups complicated by ethnic strife. It would be extremely difficult, if not impossible, to clearly pick a path that would prevent an image of either favoring a poorly governing administration, the appearance of inciting domestic unrest, or endorsing violence as a means for political change. U.S. military intervention into conflicts involving deeply rooted, and extremely convoluted alliances of ethnic tribes, is a situation that defies easily defined criteria for success.

The implementation of economic sanctions in Africa is equally fallible given the context of African politics, governing principles and an already depressed economic

situation. Economic sanctions in an increasingly globalized economy are difficult to implement without impacting economic partners in good standing. Economic sanctions are also difficult to enforce when competing nations such as China stand ready to step in and offer alternatives to countries seeking to circumnavigate the sanctions. In Africa, economic sanctions may also mean that the burden imposed by import restrictions is passed directly to the people via a corrupt government. Often, poor governance and corruption in Africa ensures that the elite and their ruling parties are minimally impacted by sanctions; the end results of lengthy sanctions are added pain and suffering for the underprivileged. In quick response, world opinion is levied against the sanctions long before they have sufficient time to work. Sanctions do offer a partial solution to fill the gap between rhetoric and taking decisive action, but they have shown a strong propensity to only serve as a symbolic gesture without producing significant benefits.

In September 2004, President Bush signed Executive Order 13357 effectively ending the sanctions imposed on Libya since the late 1980s.⁷⁶ The lifting of the sanctions included the liberation of over \$1 billion in frozen assets within the U.S. and the release of eight C130 aircraft purchased in the 1970s.⁷⁷ The sanctions were ineffective in convincing Libya to renounce terrorist activities. Rather, the Libyan government capitulated in an effort to escalate its position in African politics.

In a case of ongoing U.S. sanctions, Zimbabwe's President Mugabe and his staff continue to live in relative comfort while average citizens endure critical food shortages,

⁷⁶ Christopher Blanchard, *CRS Report for Congress: Libya: Background and U.S. Relations*, Washington DC: Congress Research Service, Updated September 17, 2008, 6.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 7.

uncontrollable inflation, and a government that does not value the lives of its citizens.⁷⁸ The majority of the sanctions imposed by the U.S. against Mugabe targets his personal travel and that of his close group of confidants, and restricts trade with government-sponsored companies. At the same time, the U.S. continues to send aid to Zimbabwe to alleviate some of the pain and suffering of its citizens. A total of \$226 million has been given to Zimbabwe since October 2007.⁷⁹ The hard power approach of employing sanctions did not gain a significant advantage for the U.S. in its relations with Libya and the sanctions in Zimbabwe are isolated to a specific group of individuals that have nothing to gain by complying with them.

Hard power approaches to other challenges in Africa are awkward, inappropriate and unwieldy. Extreme demographic shifts resulting in disease and inadequate living conditions are not readily resolved by threats or coercion. The military can be deployed into situations where it can offer relief from starvation or assist in the establishment of refugee camps, but these are short term fixes to symptoms of larger issues. The U.S. has routinely deployed combat forces as part of humanitarian missions to provide assistance to civilian populations in emergency situations such as natural disasters. In February 2008, the U.S. Navy High Speed Vessel Swift delivered aid to NGOs in Cameroon to assist in relief efforts for refugees fleeing fighting between government forces and rebel groups in Chad.⁸⁰ Ironically, the Swift was already in the Gulf of Guinea as a part of the Africa Partnership Station (APS) initiative that is part of a soft power program to build

⁷⁸ Henrietta Fore, Administrator, USAID, and Ambassador James D. McGee, On-the-Record Briefing, *Situation in Zimbabwe*, Washington DC, December 11, 2008, <http://www.state.gov/f/releases/113150.htm> (accessed January 4, 2009).

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ U.S. Department of Defense, "U.S. Navy Delivers Emergency Aid for Chad Refugees," AFRICOM News, February 11, 2008, <http://www.africom.mil/getArticle.asp?art=1640&lang=0> (accessed January 20, 2009).

capacity in partner African nations. In this way, hard power assets can serve a soft power function to effectively advance U.S. foreign policy in Africa.

Summary

The U.S. is uniquely positioned to effectively wield smart power in Africa as a result of a successful history of policy initiatives, current programs that emphasize soft power elements and a clear understanding that hard power is poorly suited for solving the majority of Africa's problems. The benefits of these U.S. led or endorsed programs are clearly visible to both supporters and skeptics in Africa. Many come to embrace the programs and appreciate the collaborative approach to problem solving. The USG understands the challenge of applying a single solution to African issues and has learned that the employment of hard power as a lead instrument can easily result in insignificant or little measureable progress. Inappropriately applied, hard power can depreciate the strength of U.S. influence on the continent. Nevertheless, opportunities for building, integrating and expanding U.S. soft power in the region should be pursued as the primary means of achieving a smart power security strategy in Africa.

CHAPTER FOUR – RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SMART POWER IN AFRICA:

“MORE COWBELL!” - REALIGNING AND BUILDING AMERICA’S SOFT POWER⁸¹

In retrospect, designing a strategy to contain the Soviet Union, with all its weapons and resources, was simple compared to the challenges ahead. As we study this problem and design a new strategy, we know that armed forces alone cannot solve these challenges. There is no “pure” solution to terrorism. If we are determined to reduce the strain on our troops, respond to the threat of global and political and cultural insurgency, and protect America, we must be prepared to make bold changes. We must provide a national security tool chest that has been enhanced with a wide variety of capabilities which would flow from the integration of our nation’s “soft” power.

- General Anthony C. Zinni, USMC (Ret.)⁸²

I look forward to this hearing, to hearing some of the answers to these critical questions, and those questions that I'm going to be looking to, Mr. Chairman, are, first, *do we have the right instruments* to effectively address these 21st century challenges? *Do we have the right people and resources* to tackle critical global challenges? Second, *do we have the right institutions*? Is our national security system, largely shaped during the Cold War era, up to the larger task we face today? And third, *do we have the right relationships among our institutions* to achieve national security objectives? *Is there a need to restructure the interagency system, and if so, how?* (Italics added by author)

- Senator Biden, Opening Comments to Senate Foreign Relations Committee on Smart Power⁸³

Introduction

Africa plays a larger role than ever in 21st Century U.S. national security strategy, given its impact on our physical and economic security. Over the next decade in Africa,

⁸¹ *Saturday Night Live*, “More Cowbell,” originally aired April 8, 2000. The comedic parody “More Cowbell” from SNL involves Will Farrell, Christopher Walken and other cast members in the recording studio where a fictitious music producer desires more and more cowbell added to a particular song.

⁸² Zinni, *Smart Power: Building a Better, Safer World*.

⁸³ Joseph R. Biden, Opening Remarks as Chairman Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Hearing on *Implementing Smart Power: Setting an Agenda for National Security Reform*, 110th Congress, 2nd Session, April 24, 2008, http://www.csis.org/images/stories/smartpower/080424_armitage-nye_sfrc_transcript.pdf (accessed January 21, 2009).

the strategic imperative for the U.S. is how to achieve a balanced, proactive and persistent engagement plan. The application of smart power in Africa will involve balancing hard and soft power elements to effectively and efficiently achieve national security objectives. Currently, the U.S. does not have sufficient soft power capacity in terms of people, programs and assets in place to successfully implement such a balanced strategy in Africa. The U.S. should realign current soft power instruments to more effectively engage the African continent while directing substantial growth in U.S. civilian agencies that accomplish this task. The potential gains to U.S. interests inside and outside of Africa are significant. Success in Africa can be a catalyst for improving relations with other countries and initiating a resurgence of U.S. global influence by attracting others to the substance and smart power methods of U.S. foreign policy.

Realignment of Current Soft Power Capacity

After almost 8 years of sustained focus on the threat of Islamic fundamentalism and terrorism, the U.S. diplomatic, defense and development posture is out of balance in Africa. The U.S. continues to use traditional methods and institutions to engage African nations. While there is a limited need to shift or realign many current programs, changes in two areas would make a substantial difference in implementing soft power programs and help gain credibility in U.S. foreign policy in Africa: the relocation of the African Center for Strategic Studies to Africa and the movement of the Department of State's African Affairs Bureau to collocate near AFRICOM headquarters.

First, the movement of the African Center for Strategic Studies (ACSS) to Africa would enhance accessibility to both African and American partners, and it would

symbolize a long term commitment by the U.S. to support African nations. Secondly, co-locating the major U.S. agencies responsible for implementing policy in Africa to a central location would facilitate a more holistic approach to policy implementation. If these adjustments were made, the U.S. would benefit from increased effectiveness and efficiency in executing our national security strategy in Africa.

The U.S. readily acknowledges that challenges confronting Africa are best solved by Africans, rather than by external entities.⁸⁴ The Department of Defense is the responsible agent for supervising the African Center for Strategic Studies as one of five Regional Centers dedicated to security cooperation and fostering relationships between governments. The ACSS mission is to serve American interests in Africa by promoting security and stability in the region through a series of direct academic programs and sponsorship of security dialogues addressing African challenges.⁸⁵ Increasing the capacity of African nations to tackle their own issues is a longstanding goal of the ACSS.

The ACSS is currently located in Washington DC and operates satellite offices on the African continent. The relocation of the ACSS to Africa would provide greater access to African men and women who want to participate in its programs. Relocating ACSS would significantly reduce the impact on guest speakers, subject matter experts and decision makers from Africa caused by travel and time away from their responsibilities. The move would provide greater access to Africans who currently reside and operate in their country, rather than those serving their country but living in America. While every attempt is made to ensure that the right people currently attend now, it can only improve if the Center is readily accessible to all Africans.

⁸⁴ The White House, *National Security Strategy*, 37.

⁸⁵ U.S. Department of Defense, Africa Center for Strategic Studies website, <http://www.AfricaCenter.org> (accessed 12 December 2008).

Physically relocating the ACSS to the African continent would also symbolize a dramatic message to African leaders that the U.S. is committed to a long-term, inclusive strategy. The George C. Marshall European Center for Strategic Studies is located in Europe where the United States European Command helps administer its programs and curriculum. A significant advantage of the Marshall Center over the ACSS is that its physical location in Germany demonstrates a long term commitment by the U.S. to address European security concerns. The co-sponsorship of the Marshall Center by the German government is an expression of equal partnership in regional stability initiatives between allies. It also adds credibility in the eyes of the international community because the Center is not assumed to be entirely an instrument of the U.S. government. Finally, the location of the Marshall Center demonstrates U.S. resolve to make the facilities and programs more accessible and oriented towards the needs of participating nations. While the ACSS is an invaluable contributor to regional security and receives high praise from its work with current and future African leaders, it is out of place in Washington DC. Like the Marshall Center, the movement of the ACSS to Africa would make a statement in the eyes of the people it most desires to impact.

Finally, the relocation of the ACSS to a country in Africa presents an opportunity to reward a nation for its shared commitment and partnership with the U.S. toward greater regional security. The relocation of the ACSS to an African nation would bring with it fiscal benefits realized during the construction and subsequent sustainment of facilities. A second, but equally important benefit is the rise in stature and regional prominence of the host-nation among its neighbors, therefore strengthening its position in the African community. In the years preceding the activation of AFRICOM, serious

debate and suspicion ensued about the possible positioning of U.S. troops and materials on the continent. The U.S. managed to avert the feeling of mistrust and doubt by maintaining AFRICOM in Germany. The movement of the well-known and inherently less threatening ACSS would likely receive less scrutiny by African nations wary of the permanent stationing of major U.S. combat forces and materials in Africa. The difficulties associated with selecting an appropriate new site for the center could be met by in-depth analysis from U.S. defense and diplomacy officials coupled with extensive dialogue with partner nations. Additional ACSS satellite offices could then be placed in distinct regions within Africa so that all geographic areas have some representation. The combination of the center's relocation and the opening of additional satellite offices would realign soft power instruments in a manner that more easily contributes to American long-term interests in Africa.

In what would certainly be revolutionary in the way the U.S. government conducts business, the relocation of the Department of State's African Affairs Bureau from Washington D.C. to an area adjacent to AFRICOM would improve the effectiveness and efficiency of synchronizing U.S. security strategy in Africa. While the USG can accommodate disagreement and dissention while forming foreign policy, it must present a unified front while implementing strategy. In 2005, the National Security Presidential Directive 44 (NSPD-44) officially endorsed interagency solutions to meet U.S. foreign policy objectives in the future.⁸⁶ The alignment of the diplomatic offices with the military headquarters responsible for achieving U.S. interest in Africa would greatly enhance daily collaboration on matters of strategic importance. The U.S. has already established a precedent for interagency cooperation in Iraq where the DoS, USAID and

⁸⁶ The White House, *National Security Presidential Directive 44 (NSPD-44)*, December 7, 2005.

DoD work in close proximity to each other. Agency norms and traditional organizational structures have already been altered to benefit operations in Africa with the integration of prominent non-military personnel in key positions within AFRICOM. As further evidence, the close working relationship of USAID, DoS and DoD in JTF-HOA is already serving as a model for future interagency cooperation with an integrated staff and measured progress on African development projects. Besides facilitating coordination and execution for U.S. agencies in Africa, the relocation of the African Affairs Bureau near AFRICOM provides centralized access for African nations seeking to coordinate diplomatic, development and defense matters.

The initial phase of any Geographic Combatant Command's Campaign Plan is designated as Phase Zero and it involves operations that are conducted in peacetime. The preponderance of interactions between the U.S. and African nations will occur during Phase Zero. Ideally, if the U.S. is successful in Phase Zero, there is no need to enter subsequent phases. The State Department is the lead agent for foreign policy in peacetime while DoD fulfills a supporting role. The complexity of Africa's challenges combined with the contemporary dynamics of foreign policy requires fully integrated U.S. strategic plans. Security and stability in Africa are not easily addressed by holding semi-annual planning conferences, periodic video-teleconferencing or daily e-mails. Placing the headquarters in close proximity to one another facilitates planning, face to face coordination and seamless execution of Phase Zero activities in support of DoS-led policy. Locating the two organizations in close proximity also supports subsequent phases if strategic goals are unattainable as a result of Phase Zero activities.

Combining the headquarters would facilitate deliberate, comprehensive U.S. planning for contingency operations and quick responses to crisis situations that will likely surface in Africa in the future. American interests are best served when we have unity of effort among departments and agencies. While responding to events such as a natural disaster or international piracy, situations will necessitate simultaneous action by more than one instrument of national power. If a military response is a part of the solution, directly involving DoS officials in the early stages of military planning and course of action development is necessary to capture their thoughts and concerns. Centrally locating diplomats and military planners on a full time basis would minimize the number of obstacles and distractions associated with geographically dispersed offices. Differences in time zones, incompatible software or hardware systems, bandwidth restrictions, challenges in the classification of documents and taxing travel requirements can all negatively impact the continuity of planning and detract from forming a coherent, cohesive response. The U.S. response to regional challenges would be better synchronized while also preventing a duplication of effort. Additionally, each department can take advantage of the core competencies and capabilities of the other. The institutional and cultural strengths of DoD include contingency and crisis action planning, while Foreign Service Agents and USAID officials are more familiar with cultural and regional sensitivities. A U.S. response formed in a closely knitted interagency effort would more effectively address the root causes of problems and it would more acutely plan for intended and mitigate unintended consequences of our actions.

There are obvious issues with co-locating the African Affairs Bureau and officials from USAID with AFRICOM headquarters but they are not insurmountable. Debate over the realignment of Department of State and Department of Defense areas of responsibility have occurred for several years, gathering support and then waning depending on the urgency of a particular issue or situation. The African continent is split among two Bureaus in the State Department: the Near East Bureau is responsible for countries generally located in North Africa, while the African Affairs Bureau is responsible for the remaining countries generally south of the Sahara Desert.⁸⁷ The narrative between departments is well established while acknowledging specific advantages and disadvantages for how they classify and categorize African nations. Yet we have been unsuccessful in developing a standard, comprehensive system that can be applied uniformly to all African countries. Despite its seeming illusiveness, the problem could be overcome with straight forward analysis and a commitment to overlook department parochialism. The strongest argument against co-locating AFRICOM, DoS Bureaus and USAID officials is that African nations may misperceive the move as a further attempt by the U.S. to militarize its foreign policy. On the contrary, an equally viable argument is that the move provides an opportunity to make better informed decisions on integrating U.S. instruments of power in an appropriate fashion to the benefit of African nations. In a January 2009 article in Joint Forces Quarterly, Ambassador Mary C. Yates explained that the division of Africa among three separate Combatant Commands made it difficult to adequately address the capacity-building

⁸⁷ U.S. Department of State, Bureaus and Offices, <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/rls/dos/1718.htm> (accessed November 21, 2008).

requirement in partner nations.⁸⁸ The formation of AFRICOM consolidated the responsibility for defense matters in Africa to one headquarters and provided consistency in regional military engagement. Taking that logic a step further, the placement of multiple departments in the same location should thoroughly integrate civil and military actions, enhance consistency in U.S. engagement and bring together USG subject matter experts on African issues. Obviously, a vitally important part of the relocation would involve a comprehensive plan to strategically communicate the U.S. intent behind the move to African leaders and to our allies.

Building Additional U.S. Soft Power Capacity

One of the most glaring shortfalls in America's ability to effectively engage Africa with soft power instruments is the number of USG personnel sufficiently trained and experienced in diplomacy and development. The lack of depth in the State Department and USAID has contributed to the underutilization of soft power as a means to achieve U.S. objectives in Africa. The necessary reinforcement of State Department personnel in areas such as Iraq and Afghanistan has only compounded the issue. Acknowledging the shortfall, the State Department and USAID have launched programs to increase the size of the diplomatic corps. In 2008, the State Department accepted significantly more applications for initial entry employment than it had positions available. Fortunately, there is a strong desire to serve our nation and work in the Foreign Service. However, the deliberate decision to use traditional methods to build the diplomatic corps will result in taking years to reach its intended goals in quantity and

⁸⁸ Mary C. Yates, "U.S. Africa Command: Value Added," *Joint Force Quarterly*, Issue 52 (National Defense University Press: 1st Quarter 2009), 154.

quality, and fall well short of serving a “smarter” policy in Africa. There is a course of action available that would immediately increase the number of personnel experienced with nation building and other civil development activities: transitioning trained personnel from the U.S. military to newly created mid-level positions in DoS and USAID.

Over the past several years in Iraq, Afghanistan and the Horn of Africa, the U.S. military has served in roles traditionally reserved for State Department and USAID officials. This has created a pool of individuals who are greatly experienced in reconstruction and stabilization tasks along with traditional contingency and military operations. These experiences translate well into the work skills related to Foreign Service Officers or USAID agents operating in Africa.

The State Department and the Department of Defense should cooperate to form a mid-career program for military personnel to transition them into critically short positions within our diplomatic and USAID corps. In the absence of qualified government diplomats and aid workers, the military has occupied a number of non-traditional roles in Afghanistan and Iraq. They have planned, coordinated and supervised the construction of civil and public projects in a host of different disciplines. The military has also been instrumental in planning, programming and supervising aid projects in the Horn of Africa and other less visible locations. Many officers and non-commissioned officers have served admirably on Provisional Reconstruction Teams and in staff positions specifically designed to support civil-military operations. Over the past seven years, military personnel have gained experience in reconstructing markets, promoting political activism, holding elections, and building infrastructure. They performed these tasks

because they were available in sufficient numbers and they were in the best position to meet the requirements after initial combat operations ended. They have shown an ability to adapt to non-military tasks, displayed a penchant for diplomacy while responding to tribal and ethnic tensions, and they have exercised good judgment under the conditions that would normally confront experienced Foreign Service Officers had they been available. No one who has witnessed the military's success has been surprised. The U.S. military is acknowledged for the gifted people that fill its ranks and a recognized professional education system that is credited with developing well-rounded managers who exercise fundamentally sound judgment. The fact that these cross-overs understand both military and interagency culture helps to mitigate some of the challenges associated with interagency operations and co-locating AFRICOM and DoS bureaus.

Over the course of the next several years, many individuals will leave military service based on expiring service agreements and a desire to do something different. The U.S. is at risk of missing this remarkable opportunity to convert an incredibly gifted pool of exiting officers and non-commissioned officers directly into government service as Foreign Service or Civil Service Officers and USAID officials. This concept is not new to State Department officials according to those who have witnessed discussions on the subject. Christian Brose, a former speech writer and policy advisor for Secretaries of State Condoleezza Rice and Colin Powell, stated on his internet blog page that the concept was endorsed by some senior DoS officials in 2005-06 but it was not favorably supported by Foreign Service personnel.⁸⁹ To date, no codified program exists.

⁸⁹ Christian Brose, "Is the Military Invading the State Department?," The Shadow Government Blog on *The NewPolicy.Com*, comment posted January 29, 2009, http://shadow.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2009/01/29/is_the_military_invading_the_state_department (accessed January 29, 2009).

The State Department petitions all qualifying U.S. citizens to apply and serve as entry level workers in the department but it lacks a suitably attractive system for mid-career migration from the military to the department. Entry level workers in the State Department must undergo inprocessing, department unique courses and initial training before their assignment to an American embassy. Upon assignment, FSOs are given tasks and responsibilities commensurate with their abilities and experience level. As in any organization, personnel are given increasingly more substantial missions as they demonstrate competence and become familiar with departmental procedures and practices. In many ways, military personnel have already demonstrated competence in nation building tasks and only lack the knowledge of diplomatic procedures. The precept that military personnel lack exposure to traditionally diplomatic functions is not as accurate as it once may have been prior to 9/11. A more mature and experienced force is now available for transition.

Military personnel are learning the inner ways of diplomacy and U.S. development procedures as a residual result of their gradual rise in numbers within embassy walls. The war on terrorism has produced a more interagency savvy and experienced military professional who in some cases are very familiar with embassy protocol. A December 2006 report to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee indicated a rise in military activities within American embassies as a result of the numerous new tasks associated with the war on terror.⁹⁰ While many of the activities are defense related, some are related to development, social progress and public awareness. The report cites the Horn of Africa in particular for the blurring of lines between what is

⁹⁰ Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, U.S. Congress, *Embassies as Command Posts in the Anti-Terror Campaign*, 109th Congress, 2d Session, December 15, 2006, <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/congress/index.html> (accessed September 12, 2008), 6.

normally considered defense related initiatives and more traditional civic assistance projects.⁹¹ The projects approved by the Ambassador are funded within the defense budget and the military acts as the executing directorate within the embassies to accomplish these specific projects. Consequently, the officers and NCOs who are working diligently on the projects are gaining invaluable experience both in the use of U.S. aid and in the inter-workings of embassies and their staff. A program designed to transition mid-career military professionals with this experience to the DoS and USAID would greatly benefit U.S. diplomacy and foreign assistance.

A transition program would need to include an active recruiting campaign to identify, screen and entice highly skilled military personnel who have served in the right assignments during their service. The program could begin with active recruitment of veterans who are in the final stages of their service obligation. As an incentive for continued service to their nation, an offer is made to people who transition from DoD to DoS with a military-type reenlistment bonus highlighting modified terms for continuing service in another government agency. Newly arriving military personnel at DoS would undergo a modified education program designed specifically for transitioning individuals, not unlike the Mustang Career Mobility Program that DoS currently offers their Civil Service and Foreign Service Specialists wishing to join the Foreign Service Generalist career field.⁹² A transition course would include standardized instruction on DoS specific procedures and policies but conceivably at an accelerated pace. Geographically specific courses and language training may also be warranted. A substantial difference occurs after the completion of the initial training however. After undergoing essential

⁹¹ Ibid., 9.

⁹² U.S Department of State, *U.S. Department of State Careers – Training and Development*, <http://careers.state.gov/general/training.html> (accessed January 30, 2009).

training, the assignments of new department personnel migrating through the transition program should be at mid-level positions matching their experience and skill set rather than entry level positions. Graduates are then available for immediate use to expand overseas staff and operations, an area particularly under-sourced according to a report by the American Academy of Diplomacy.⁹³ Feedback from the performance of recent graduates would provide immediate feedback into the program to adjust the transition course as necessary. Adapting a more flexible and responsive system for mid-career transition would quickly improve the attractiveness of continuing government service in a different capacity. A successful transition program would accelerate the growth of personnel immediately available for U.S. foreign assistance and simultaneously retain a group of experienced, selfless government workers.

At a minimum, the USG should design a program to identify and designate individuals who are leaving active duty military service to volunteer for service with the Civilian Reserve Corps rather than the Individual Ready Reserves. The 2006 National Security Strategy called for the development of a Civilian Reserve Corps that would be available in times of need to assist in disaster relief and post-conflict reconstruction.⁹⁴ The program is in its infancy and could use the influx of former military personnel to expand its ranks. Military professionals exiting the service have a number of desirable skills and talents that are desperately needed in a country ravaged by natural disasters, poor health conditions and war. Enhancing DoS ability to conduct nation building activities reduces the workload for DoD which performs these activities by default. Under this program, the pool of personnel available as individual augmentees for DoD is

⁹³ Boyatt, *A Foreign Affairs Budget for the Future*, 14.

⁹⁴ The White House, *National Security Strategy*, 45.

reduced, but it significantly improves America's future capacity for responding to crisis situations and a post-hostilities environment.

Summary

The capacity of the U.S. to effectively employ soft power in Africa must undergo fundamental changes in regard to alignment and growth. Repositioning the ACSS to Africa and the Bureau of African Affairs to a location near AFRICOM will make them more effective in organizing, coordinating and synchronizing U.S. security strategy. Realigning U.S soft power instruments is only part of the solution. The U.S. must increase the size of its current diplomatic corps. A readily available pool of well-qualified, experienced individuals resides in the men and women of our Armed Forces. Implementing programs that will facilitate the transition of mid-career professionals from the Department of Defense to programs in the State Department and USAID will substantially improve the U.S.'s ability to wield soft power.

CONCLUSION

I believe that American leadership has been wanting, but is still wanted. We must use what has been called “smart power”: the full range of tools at our disposal – diplomatic, economic, military, political, legal, and cultural – picking the right tool, or combination of tools, for each situation. With smart power, diplomacy will be the vanguard of foreign policy.

-- *Honorable Hillary R. Clinton, Secretary of State Confirmation Hearing*⁹⁵

The U.S. is entering an intriguing period in history when the arrival of a new Administration coincides with two ongoing wars against extremists and an economic recession that affects the globe. The new administration will certainly address these important issues, but it also needs to develop policies that sustain America’s position in the international community as a leader of the free world and a source of hope during difficult times. Recent U.S. foreign policy priorities and activities have been primarily consumed by our affairs in the Middle East, particularly our reliance on hard power tactics. America can not continue on this narrowly focused path and realistically expect the world to view our policies in other parts of the world as legitimate or positive in nature. To properly secure American interests the U.S. must implement balanced policy that is consistent, grounded in strategic context, and that employs the full complement of American instruments of power.

Africa represents one region where the need to secure American interests is stronger now than at any point in our history. Africa is vitally important to protecting U.S. citizens against terrorism and it is central to securing greater energy security for our nation. Securing America’s access to markets throughout the world hinges on the

⁹⁵ Hillary R. Clinton, Statement before Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Nomination Confirmation Hearings, 111th Congress, 1st Session, January 13, 2009, <http://foreign.senate.gov/hearings/2009/hrg090113a.html> (accessed January 17, 2009).

protection of global commons that circumvent the African continent. If the U.S. is to continue promoting freedom, justice and human dignity in the world, then it must address the challenges that face Africa due to poor governance, underdevelopment, human suffering and constant shift in demographics.

The problems that traditionally plague progress in Africa are not easily addressed with traditional hard power methods. As demonstrated by Senator Clinton's testimony at her confirmation hearing before the Senate Foreign Relations committee, the idea of "smart power" is surfacing among strategists and policymakers as a more appropriate approach to America's foreign policy. The U.S. must carefully balance the use of hard and soft power to successfully achieve national security objectives, particularly in Africa. Applying smart power in Africa will rely on a greater preponderance of soft power, where conditions are already uniquely suited for its use. The USG has already implemented some highly successful soft power programs which can be leveraged for future gains. The use of additional soft power activities will generate flexibility for new strategic initiatives. An additional benefit of soft power over hard power in Africa is the probable stimulation of international support, and the ability of the U.S. to share fiscal and manpower costs in pursuit of national security objectives.

The use of soft power in Africa will not negate the requirement for the U.S. to be prepared to use hard power, if and when necessary. As a combatant command, AFRICOM is ready to fulfill its Title X responsibilities as a warfighting headquarters. Meanwhile, it has already put into service a series of exercises and programs that will hopefully preclude its use in a hard power role. America must be willing to accept that soft power will likely take longer to see the intended results of foreign policy, and that we

will realize some risks associated with using soft power as a primary method of engaging African nations. The U.S. may still need to use hard power as a last resort after engaging with soft power techniques to solve a problem. However, the risks are minimal compared to substantial gains in the legitimacy of U.S. policies on the continent and within the international community.

In order to take full advantage of soft power in Africa, the U.S. must realign its existing soft power instruments while simultaneously growing others. The African Center for Strategic Studies should move to Africa where it can offer better utilization of its tremendously talented staff, create greater access for African nations, and increase rapport with African leaders. The relocation of the Department of State's Bureau for Africa Affairs near AFRICOM will facilitate a more synchronized strategy. The USG will be in a position to more thoroughly coordinate plans to address Africa's enduring challenges and handle crisis situations as they occur. However, simply realigning current capacity is not sufficient to meet the demands of securing U.S. interests in Africa. The U.S. must grow its diplomatic capacity. The utilization of a mid-career transition program from DoD can make an immediate impact on the size and quality of our diplomatic and aid corps. Years of service in Iraq and Afghanistan in capacities once reserved solely for diplomats or USAID workers, has created a pool of well trained and experienced military professionals that can contribute to national security objectives using soft power tactics. Immediate gains can be made by shifting personnel assets from DoD to DoS with strategic gains on both sides.

The U.S.'s inconsistent strategy to achieve national security interests in Africa is obsolete. The next several years will be crucial to developing a more self-reliant and

sustainable African continent. The U.S. can best meet its own national security objectives, and the needs of African nations, by increasing its use of soft power instruments to achieve a smart way ahead. By working smarter, not harder, the U.S. can achieve its strategic foreign policy objectives in Africa.

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